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This research is a complex anthropological study of interreligious violence in the North Moluccas. The research includes field study in Halmahera before, during and after the outbreak of warfare in 1999. The author examines the history of political and economic policies that formed religious identities over a long period of time. This analysis challenges common understandings of ritual. Religion and trade during the colonial period brought modernization to the Moluccas but also created resistance in the people that is seen in their rituals. The author suggests that ritual is a key for understanding the dynamics of power within families, clans, villages and the state of Indonesia. Ritual mediates and negotiates power by uniting material concerns with ideology. Rituals in the North Moluccas establish a link between the macrocosmic world of symbolic meanings and the microcosmic world of everyday life, by drawing from a long historical memory. When the ritual negotiations do not work out, ritual can become the stimulus for violence. Rituals of exchange in the Moluccas include religious, cultural, economic and political elements that cannot be separated from each other. The author shows how a community of Muslims and Christians was drawn into the violence and then worked for reconciliation. This book combines academic commitment with local understanding. As a Moluccan-Javanese, the author's xperiences are part of the phenomena she is studying. It is a complex piece of research that is laced with stories that are simple but profound.

Farsijana R. Adeney-Risakotta is an anthropologist, social activist, women's advocate, educator and theologian. She works at Duta Wacana Christian University, in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

Politics, Ritual and Identity in Indonesia
A Moluccan History of Religion and Social Conflict

Adeney-Risakotta

Politics, Ritual and Identity in Indonesia
A Moluccan History of Religion and Social Conflict

A Dissertation by
Farsijana R. Adeney-Risakotta
Radboud University of Nijmegen
The Netherlands

Politics, Ritual and Identity in Indonesia

Politics, Ritual and Identity in Indonesia
A Moluccan History of Religion and Social Conflict

Een wetenschappelijke proeve op het
gebied van de Sociale Wetenschappen

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Beginning with a question, this dissertation grew and grew until it became a book. I wrote this dissertation, not just to get a Ph.D. degree, but as a step in my intellectual journey. The lives of many people intersected with mine in the long process of writing this book. I could not have written it without their help. In the process my life became intertwined with the history of Ngidiho, in North Moluccas, Indonesia. I share many pictures that I took of the people in Ngidiho, and other communities in North Moluccas to show visually a social history of a people's tragedy and their recovery to continue their life.

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CONTENTS

Maps
Pictures
Charts
Letters
Figures

Chapter I
Personal Background to the Research

> "If nobody reads our studies – virtually in their entirety – our efforts are doomed to obscurity. We need not apologize for efforts to make our work interesting" (Wolcott: 1995, 209).

1.1. Escape from Violence: Blessing or Disaster?

A few days after violence broke out in the North Moluccas, some people thought it meant the end of my research. Apparently, the village where I conducted my fieldwork was gone, burned to the ground. I had just left Ngidiho for a few days to celebrate Christmas with our family in Yogyakarta. On 27 December 1999, my husband and I were on the way back to Ngidiho, as we had promised to celebrate Idul Fitri with uncle Din (*Oom Din*) and his family. However, in North Sulawesi, we heard the news of the recent burning of the village during the explosion of violence. We experienced shock and grief.

The process of writing this book is like two sides of a coin. It brings back many traumatic memories but it is also a healing therapy. In my original plans I expected to stay in Ngidiho until late January 2000, before taking a brief trip out. However I changed my schedule because of several factors. First, I discovered that January and February 2000 would be key months that year, in the religious activities of the village, while December 1999 would be relatively quiet. Secondly, my laptop computer broke down, therefore it needed to be fixed. Thirdly, my research had proceeded very quickly and December was a good month to stop and evaluate my data. Therefore, providentially, I left Halmahera in December 1999, before the violence spread to Galela.

The tensions were spreading and rumours flew like wildfire after war in Central Halmahera led to the eviction of the Makians from Kao, followed by the slaughter of Christians in Tidore and Ternate in early November 1999. Nevertheless, I felt safe in Ngidiho. I was surrounded with loving people who condemned the increasing tensions between Muslims and Christians. *Oom* Din sent a touching message to my husband to the effect that he should not worry about my safety. He said he would die himself, before he would allow anything bad to happen to me. Fortunately, I left the village before his extravagant promise could be put to the test!

However, *Oom* Din accompanied me as far as Ternate at the end of November 1999, before my departure to Java. Besides him, there were more than twenty of the Village Heads of the Galela District who were all Muslims. They went to attend a meeting for all the village Heads of the Galela District, organised by the governmental elites in Ternate. None of the Christian village Heads made the trip due to the fears of fresh violence in Tidore and Ternate. It was very dangerous for

Christians to travel to Ternate, but it was difficult to leave the area without going through Ternate.

The village officials were going to attend a meeting, planned by the government, to discuss the offer of land from the state to those Galela peasants who had already sold their land to the *Perusahaan Terbatas Global Agronusa Indonesia (PT GAI*), a Banana Company since it started operation in 1991 (see Chapter III).[1] In Ternate I stayed with a trusted Muslim friend (a Makian), who showed me around the damaged city. I was probably the only Christian in Ternate at the time. I introduced my friend to *Oom* Din. This was fortunate since later on, after the violence engulfed Galela, my friend was able to locate *Oom* Din and his family among the crowded Muslim refugees in Ternate who had fled from their burnt out villages (see Chapter VI). Through my friend I was able to communicate with *Oom* Din after it became clear that I could not go back to Ngidiho.

Violence and destruction engulfed almost the whole of Halmahera. The village of Ngidiho was burned to the ground. All of my belongings that I had left behind, including my motorcycle, were burned along with *Oom* Din's house. Over the telephone, he told the story of how he had tried to defend his house. Many arrows were shot at him but he said he was invulnerable (*kabal*), and not one arrow entered his body. He said he is invulnerable because he practices *Sou-Sou*. Sadly, in the end, his house was burned anyway while he and his family escaped. Christians had fled to Tobelo (the neighbouring district south of Galela) and Manado (North Sulawesi), while Muslim fled to Ternate and Tidore (see Chapter VI).

This tragedy was not the end of my research. The more I wrote down my thoughts, the more I became conscious that my research is now even more valuable. My providential escape from the violence, not only may have saved my life. It also helped protect me from the tragic bias that inevitably occurs when you have to identify with one of the warring sides in order to preserve your safety. While no one can claim perfect objectivity, at least I was free to continue my research without being drawn into the extreme emotions that accompany war. It is a kind of miracle that I am able to continue this project while retaining love for people on both sides.

Facing up to the unfolding reality of this tragedy, is like meeting the essence of truth that only expresses itself through a process of becoming that is never quite finished. Perhaps only when finished reading the story that follows, will the reader understand the flaming sorrow that erupted from this human tragedy that recently occurred in the life of the people in Halmahera. How could conflict erupt in a peaceful agrarian society to the point that thousands were killed and human life seemed to lose all value? That is a question that lurks behind the extended series of questions that are waiting at the final stage of humanity's own journey. This is also a question that I can share with the people the Moluccas by comparing

[1] The interview was conducted with one of the Village Head of Galela District who was at the trip. Ternate, November 25, 1999.

different interpretations of the socio-political circumstances before and after the conflict in the North Moluccas (see Chapter VII).

There are several goals of this research. First, the aim is to understand the conflict and violence in Halmahera that peaked in 1999-2000. Secondly, in order to do so we have to see how power relations have changed in the years/decades before 1999. Thirdly, I want to show how conflict was fought through ritual. Ritual is part of a socio-cultural history that functions in the making and solving of conflict. Many rituals are created through a long historical process of social change. These symbolic actions serve multiple purposes and are liable to be used as political tools that can drive people to violence. The participants are drawn into rival, all-pervasive perspectives on the events. These perspectives almost perfectly reflect the picture of their convictions that stem from various symbols from their ethnic or religious commitments. In all rituals there are elements of preparation, expression, meaning and fulfilment in the symbolic action that is carried out. The tragedy of violence in the Moluccas followed a pattern like a customary ritual ceremony that focuses the power of the people. In the centre of this ritual lies the quest for identity.

Understanding this question and trying to answer it helps me to map the conflict and observe how the people managed to stop the violence. In the process of writing, the question developed into two questions that provide a more analytic framework to guide my research. These two question are:

1). What is the meaning of ritual and how does it function to create both solidarity and conflict in the community, thus influencing the formation of the people's identities in North Moluccas?

2). How did political practices during the colonial period and Indonesian state rituals, shape regional political identities in North Moluccas?

1.2. A Researcher without Boundaries?

While writing this dissertation, I experienced again my sorrow at the broken contact with the people with whom I used to live. Generally I could feel the barriers that still stand between people, families and neighbours after the conflict. However, I am inspired by their innocence and seriousness, their ignorance and their knowledge, and their anger and joy. Their various moods of heart and mind inspire me to endure in the process of scientific research as a focal point of my own intellectual journey. Even though, some of the people of Galela didn't allow me to share in their inner thoughts, most of the people showed me honour and invited me to know them better, both during my first four-month stay in Ngidiho in 1999, and later when I returned to the area in February 2002 and March 2004. Through these people, I also learned about the others who didn't want to have contact with me. I observed their lives through their practices. In their interactions with others I could see how they coped with the challenges of life they had to face.

As a researcher, I face certain boundaries that limit the areas in which I can explore the mysterious movements of the Galela people. At the first Friday prayer time, I asked *Oom* Din whether I could attend the *sholat*[2] at the mosque, and he said no. He said this is the rule that he has to follow, as he is not allowed to go to the church for a Christian service. *Oom* Din imposed this boundary because I am a Christian, even though my religion does not itself require such boundaries. There are borders imposed, which condition a people's experience of "the other". This particular boundary of religion did not abolish other kinds of tolerance that people can give and receive. For example, I was invited to attend a thanksgiving prayer (*tahlilan*) at their new unfinished mosque, before they poured the cement foundation for its roof. This was an uncommon invitation since, according to local custom, only men are allowed to attend the prayers at a family gathering. Women cook but the men eat after the prayers are finished.

A barrier is erected when people start to distinguish their living practices from others. Divisions are strengthened through religious rituals that express a political identity. The borders that separated me from certain activities created a feeling of secrecy. For example, when I was taught not to visit people at dinnertime, because of their belief in taboos (*boboso*), I conformed to their practices and I didn't go. Although going to the mosque during the *sholat* is not permitted for those who are non-Muslims, visiting the mosque at other times and for other purposes is freely permitted. Later I discovered that among the Ngidiho Muslims, a distinction is made between the secrecy surrounding traditional taboos (*boboso*) and (*saali*), which were considered a human production and Muslim taboos, which ruled their religious practices (*fardu*, Arabic for "the law of God").

So, what were my boundaries? This question became urgent when I had to decide whether or not to return to Galela after the violence broke out. I did not want to go to the Christian community in Tobelo, where I would be accepted, because that would identify me with the enemies of the Muslims of Galela. Nor could I return to Galela where there was no possibility for me to be among Muslim villagers who were at war with Christians. With this last realization, I began to see clearly the border that had been vague during my stay in Galela, before the conflict in December 1999. When a taboo no longer strengthens the relationships within families and between friends in a small village, the taboo, which marks a border, looses power to regulate boundaries of behaviours and can unleash violence.

Nevertheless, taboos, including the sharply drawn boundary between Muslims and Christians during the explosion of violence, must be respected. With respect for their borders, which had now been drawn in blood, I decided to just portray Halmahera from a distance. When we heard of the bloodshed, my husband who had deep concern for the people of Halmahera, both Christians and Muslims, wanted to visit them. We were in Manado at the time, not far away, and he managed to arrange passage on a private ship. However it was clear to me that I

[2] *Sholat* is usually translated prayer, but in fact is closer to our understanding of the word "worship."

could not go. Fortunately, his plan to enter the dangerous area was prevented by an unusual illness. Before the ship left, mysterious lumps began growing on his neck. We left Manado in search of medical help and eventually the lumps were removed through an operation in Singapore. Until now, we still do not know what was the cause of his sickness.

When I first became deeply involved in the human tragedy of the Moluccas, I felt that it would be impossible to write an academic study about it. Besides being unprepared to deal with this kind of disaster, I also doubted where I stood in it all, and felt that I must be very careful in writing about such a violent tragedy. Even though I gathered mountains of valuable data on the Moluccan conflict that was no guarantee that I could finish such a demanding task. Conflicts in Indonesia are complex and sensitive phenomena. It is very easy to be carried away in a river of emotions in the direction of prejudices that can subvert the possibility of an appropriate and balanced view of the problem. Perhaps it is easier to write about 'violence' in a distant, conceptual manner without having to experience the anguish of its practice. For me, it required a long period of reflection before I could arrive at a responsible perspective that integrated my own thoughts, anxiety and feelings of ignorance.

The complexity of violence in Indonesia cannot be explained through a simplistic model of provocation that results in religious conflict. Currently, everywhere in Indonesia, tension between human groups is very high. The tension breaks out in village level violence, where people are mobilised for attacking another village. Indonesia is justly famous for its gentle, hospitable, tolerant people, who generally live in peace together in spite of remarkable cultural diversity. But during the period of my research, even small tensions could erupt into bloodshed.

In the Moluccan conflict, and various other open conflicts that are chronic in Indonesia, tensions are manipulated through the use of symbols of race, ethnicity and religion. Sophisticated methods are used to socialize emotional symbols capable of mobilizing large numbers of people. Public opinion is formed such that false rumours are transformed into facts that are based on fears. Simultaneously, people believe the promises of material benefits such as land and wealth after they achieve victory over their "enemy". Each group ties itself together through charges against their enemies and attack based on the conviction that these charges are true. Convictions transform rumours into reality, and leave us guessing about what really happened in the region.

Among the victims of this human disaster are simple people who know the history of their sharing every day in a rural community but are not in a positon to critically evaluate a discourse that mixes their local quarrels with transcendent beliefs. When an adversarial ideology is created by important and powerful people, the villagers are forced to choose and agree with the dominant discourse. As time goes by they become more and more sure of the truth of a discourse which at first they may have doubted or denied.

This dissertation is not just an academic report, but nor is it a novel. It is a modest attempt to express one aspect of the truth about what happened in North Moluccas as experienced by the ordinary people. Therefore it is both a narration and an academic work of research. As an academic analysis this dissertation strives for accuracy, honesty and impartiality. But it is also a work that springs from the stories that I heard and experienced together with the communities of Halmahera. The questions and reflections of the Halmaheran people over the past 13 years, since I began working with them in a community development project in 1990, are a part of this dissertation.

1.3. Becoming a Scientific Analysis

Writing this dissertation on this topic is my fate as an Indonesian and a Moluccan-Javanese social scientist, who happened to be doing research in the area when the conflict broke out. I have tried to avoid polemics intended to justify or condemn any particular party. Listening, witnessing and reflecting on national discourses, local opinion and ordinary practices, has driven me to think about creative, appropriate and united approaches to map the problem in the North Moluccas, and the Moluccas at large. This study provides a microanalysis of social change at the village level in relation to macro changes in the regional, national and international spheres. It is intended for those concerned about social conflict and conflict resolution in general. More specifically it is about how the local people of Halmahera cope with violence. It is hoped that the study will prove useful to those who have been involved in the conflict, in their own efforts to solve their own problems. The information contained in this study is intended for humanitarian purposes to improve our knowledge and understanding and to aid the people in their efforts to rebuild their lives after a terrible loss.

The causes of violence in Ngidiho lie in the history and geo-political conditions of the region. People, who are the subjects of the violence, are also the subjects of reconciliation. This study does not focus on violence, as if it were the main concern for explaining the destruction in the Ngidiho society. Locating the study in a bigger picture of the political transformation of Indonesian society, provides me with sources for understanding how identities have been shaped through the long, historical struggles of the people in the area. This approach is consistent with my moral commitments as a researcher who portrays the people as agents of transformation. Local practices and the history of ordinary people have to be respected.

I was privileged to experience the struggles of the people just before and after the violence. This made it possible to analyse this case study comprehensively based on direct observation. This study shows that power distinguishes and identifies the people according to their interests, belief and history. Their relationships include elements of trust, competition, agreement, modes of exchange, hierarchy, domination and subjugation. This creates the potential both for conflict and reconciliation. Conflict in inter-personal affairs can become large scale when its nature is structured and mobilized by each group involved in the dispute.

Solidarity is negotiated through common symbols, history and material interests of each group.

The New Order regime (the popular name for the government of President Suharto who ruled Indonesia from 1966 - 1998), homogenized differences and created a myth of a single national identity at the expense of democratisation. The collapse of the New Order in 1998 also threatened the national unity of Indonesia. Indonesia is searching for a new political format that respects regional, ethnic and religious differences. The homogenizing method is still practiced in the process of uniting each group according to their ethnic or religious affiliation. The New Order regime asserted its power in sharp contrast with the former authorities of *the Old Order* and the Colonialists. The *Reformation* government uses the same tactics and in the process obscures the richness of ethno-religious values as they appear in the ethnographic account of the Ngidiho people. Homogenisation of groups benefits the politicians in terms of short-term material support but undermines the long tradition of democratisation and justice in Indonesian society (see Chapters III, V, VIII).

Identity politics as a means of homogenizing and regimenting people can be traced to the early colonial period. Dutch colonialism followed a policy of "divide and rule", while nationalism stressed "unity". My research examines how identity formation has impacted the Indonesian people, especially those who are in the region of the North Moluccas. Primary and secondary resources of historical accounts are employed in this research to articulate the shaping process of identity politics of the local people. I examine the historical origins of ancient symbols and ritual practices that appeared during the process of the recent conflict. My interpretation of the historical accounts is based on what different groups in Halmaheran society perceive about their own history (see Chapters IV, VII and VIII).

In their fascinating discussion of the invention of tradition, Hobsbawm and Ranger were unable to show how old material is used in new traditions and how new languages are needed for extending the meaning of old symbols (Hobsbawm: 1984 [1983], 7). This is because they work from archival or documentary sources and do not observe the process. In my research I watched new traditions come into being. This dissertation elaborates how Indonesian politics employs ritual, drawing from the practices that are available in Indonesian society. If ritual is viewed only as a kind of spiritual practice it will result in a misinterpreting of the social history of the people. The Halmaheran people establish and re-establish their practices in order to form their identities in relation to their memories of the past.

The violence of the recent years worsens the relationships of not only the Ngidiho people but also the entire society of the North Moluccas. There might be sceptical feelings among Indonesians as well as other readers towards the efforts of reconciliation after the trouble and violence. In this study, I give an empirical account on how the people and their history have changed after the conflict. In

order to create a conflict, a universal symbol can be used to mobilize the people. During the process of reconciliation, such symbols tend to be localized in the context of kinship and village so that the people can develop their trust in a natural way (see Chapter VII). In order to understand the Moluccan conflict, we need not only to focus upon its history and the violence, but also on the way people try to settle it afterwards by negotiation and the creation of new meanings.

Drawing this analysis from the everyday practices of the people provides lots of material sources to reconstruct the socio-political history of the people. I use my own ethnographic accounts as the main instrument for examining the present practices of the people. Older sources of ethnographic accounts can be found in the travelling reports that were written by Dutch missionaries who worked at the region. I carefully examine both primary and secondary resources in order to understand the interpretations and assumptions that coloured their work (see Chapters III and IV). I trace the oral history of the people by observing their present practices together with their own explanations. With this approach, I hope the world of Galela can be seen through the eyes of the people.

A multidisciplinary approach is required to come up with a viable interpretation about the real experiences of the people (see Chapter II). As an ethnographer I have to admit my limitations, both in the mastery of all the social scientific disciplines (including anthropology, history, economics, sociology, political science and study of religion), and in access to all the perspectives available. Every researcher has a limited "horizon of meaning". I cannot claim access to all of the narrations from the people that would be required to understand all of the dynamics of these complex events. However, with a careful study, I have tried to locate this case study of the transformation of the Ngidiho people in chronological and thematic order starting from the period before the conflict and ending with the stage of reconciliation after the violence had ended.

As a part of an academic community, I have to explain theoretical approaches, assumptions, hypotheses, the core questions and methodologies that are employed in this study. In the second chapter, I will discuss broadly the theory of ritual as an entrance to portray this case study. Social science theory is determined by a dominant worldview and discourse (Gouldner: 1970; Marcus and Fischer: 1995). In this study I don't have any intention of building a universal theory. Rather, I concentrate on local actors, such as the people in Ngidiho, who cope with an extreme situation of change in their social life. The people who survive violence are radically transformed.

In anthropological research, ritual is a debatable subject that gives rise to many polemics. This study concentrates on the analysis of ritual in North Moluccas. In North Moluccas, rituals are dynamic. They are reciprocal acts of negotiation and exchange, which unite and distinguish people by symbolic actions that express political, social, cultural and economic power differences. Some readers might not appreciate my long discussion of the theory of the ritual and politics (see Chapter II). However I need social theory as an analytical tool to examine the unique phenomena of the field research. This theoretical approach leads me to focus on

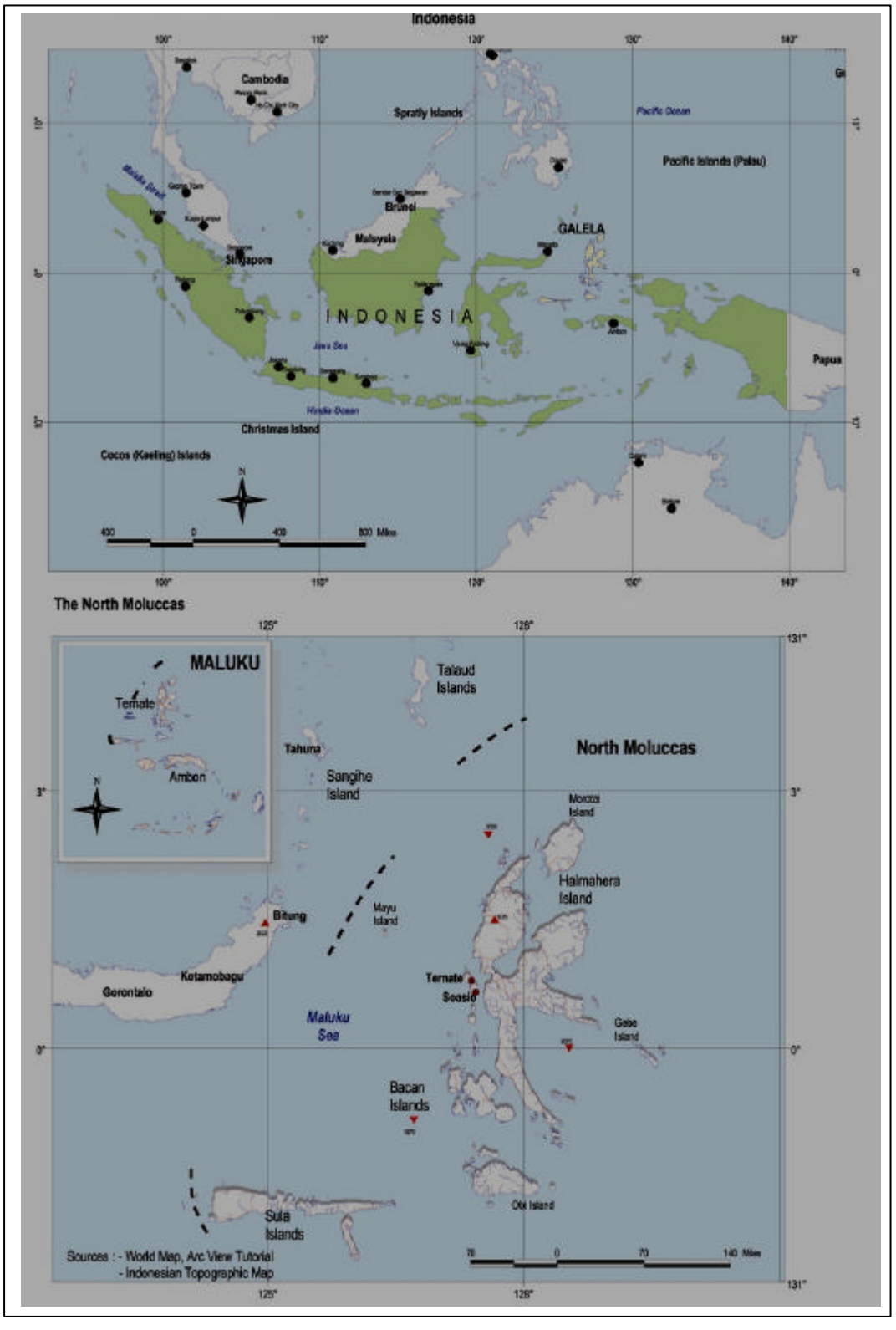
the dominant discourses used in the political and academic debates about the ongoing conflict in the Moluccas at large. Admitting the possibility that a case study based on the experience of one village or one area oversimplifies the conflict, I invite other scholars and lay readers to interact with the process of interpretation in this empirical study. I would like to see this study as an opening dialogue between Indonesians and international scholars to enrich our understanding of how to cope with violence in the context of social change.

1.4. From the Field: a New Province

When I wrote my research proposal in 1999, Halmahera was still a part of the Province of the Moluccas. The North Moluccas was a Regency in the Province. On October 12, 1999, the Ministry of Domestic Affairs in Jakarta officially announced the establishment of the Province of the North Moluccas. The need for a separate province of the North Moluccas was first stated about fifty years ago, and again during the Permesta period (1959-61) before it was fulfilled.[3] On October 20, 1999, people celebrated the delivery of the Legal Documents (*pataka Propinsi*), brought by the Caretaker of the new province, Surasmin, into the land of the North Moluccas, which people called *Bumi Maluku- Kie-Raha*. They saw this event as a sign of the freedom of which they had been dreaming. The opening ritual called *Joko Kaha*, which means, "step on the land" was conducted in Ternate. The people were dressed up in traditional costumes and rode in their *kora-kora* (Ternatenese traditional war boats). The articulation of old memories of the pride of the Northern Muslim kingdoms, as it appeared in the celebrations, felt like a miracle had occurred and there was now no going back. According to many newspapers the welcoming ceremony for the new province was more festive than the welcome given to the Indonesian president.[4]

[3] (Djahir, M.S :1964). See also Radar Ternate (October 23, 1999).
[4] See, Radar Ternate (October 23, 1999).

Map 1: Province of the North Moluccas



The changing of the status of the North Moluccas was not a new idea. Rather it reflected an effort to revitalize the idea of the realm of *Maluku-Kie-Raha* that is portrayed in Moluccan political myths. *Maluku-Kie-Raha* refers to the four vulcanic islands of Ternate, Tidore, Moti, and Makian. These were associated with four "sultanates", namely Jailolo and Bacan besides the Sultanates of Tidore and Ternate. The Sultan of Ternate appeared to be the most successful in dealing with the colonial powers (see Chapter IV).

Maintaining a degree of independence in directing his government, the Sultan of Ternate was involved in all trade agreements managed by colonial powers (van Fraassen:1999). The colonial powers implemented a policy of destroying the production of spices in the Northern part of the Moluccan archipelago in order to break down the power of the Sultanates. The colonial government which controlled central and Southern Moluccas set up a new centre for the production of spices in Ambon and its neighbouring island where were easier to dominate than the areas controlled by the Sultan.

This colonial policy influenced the Indonesian government policy during both the Old Order and the New Order regimes to locate Ambon as the centre of the Province of the Moluccas. It did so because of the availability of developed infrastructures in Ambon with the effect that the Muslim majority area in the North was second to the Christian areas around Ambon in development efforts. The present distinction between the peoples of the North Moluccas, the Central Moluccas and the South Moluccas is not only based on cultural differences but also on their inherited traditions of government.

After Independence, the Old and New Order governments minimized the role of the Sultans in the North Moluccas. The end of the Sultan's power to run his territory came in 1956 when D.M.M. Usman Syah stepped down from his position as the "Resident" of Ternate.[5] The term "Resident" was used by the Dutch to name a governmental officer who served as a bridge between a Governor and a Regent. The Indonesian government practiced a politics of centralisation among the official bureaucracy by appointing members of the Javanese middle class to strategic positions throughout the whole country. As a result, the North Moluccan Sultans disappeared into largely symbolic roles during most of the first fifty years of Indonesian independence.

The collapse of Suharto's New Order government in May 21, 1998, opened the way for minority groups to struggle for their regional autonomy (see Chapter V). It also revived the ancient enmity between the neighbouring "brothers":: the Sultan of Ternate and the Sultan of Tidore. The Sultan of Ternate (a Muslim) was allied with disenfranchised traditional groups such as the indigenous tribes of Kao, Halmahera, who are predominantly Christian (or "animist"); although about 10% are Muslim. In her study, Leontine Visser noted that the Sultan of Ternate traditionally received support from the districts of Sahu, Jailolo and Dodinga, in the form of manpower for wars and tributes of rice (Visser:1989, 19). Some

[5] See, Informasi Kecamatan (1993, 2)

traditional North Moluccans saw him as a natural choice for Governor of the new province.

However, the Sultan of Ternate was strongly opposed by a group of professional people who were members of the government bureaucracy. A well-educated group from the island of Makian had dominated the channels of political and economic power in Ternate for the past twenty years or more. They were anxious not to lose their power to a resurgent Sultanate, whom they also viewed as an apostate Muslim. In the struggle to re-establish their power in the new Province of the North Moluccas, the Makian professionals allied with the Sultan of Tidore against the Sultan of Ternate. The tension, between the Sultan of Ternate and Tidore included controversy over the location of the capital of the North Moluccas (Ternate or Tidore), and over who should become the new governor (see Chapter V).

The island of Halmahera resembles a letter 'K' and was divided into two territories, or Regencies before it became a Province. The two wings, upper and below were included in the Regency of the North Moluccas with its capital city on the island and city of Ternate. The Centre belonged to the Special Regency of Central Halmahera. Its capital was located in the town of Soa Sio, on the island of Tidore. Ternate and Tidore are two small islands, close to each other and not far from the Western side of Halmahera. After the North Moluccas was upgraded to a Province in 2002, Galela was divided into several Districts. Tobelo became the capital of the Regency of Northern Halmahera. The plans to increase the number of official Regencies in the province of the North Moluccas was realized through regulation number 1, 2003 or UU Pemekaran Propinsi Maluku Utara No. 1, 2003 (see Chapter VII).

Since 1971, the Sultan of Ternate has been involved with the ruling Golkar party which appointed him as one of the representatives in the delegation of the North Moluccan Regency to the DPR (Parliament), in Jakarta (see van Fraassen:1999, 60). Golkar is the party of the former New Order government. The elite competition between the Sultan of Ternate, and his rivals became obvious during the era of reform in Indonesia, which started in 1998. When I was in Ngidiho, I listened, through the radio, to the ordination ceremony for the Sultan of Ternate, H. Mudaffar Syah, to become the Head of the Legislative Assembly of the North Moluccas Province (DPRD). His appointment as the head of DPRD stemmed from his leadership of the Golkar party. On October 18, 1999, after the announcement of the new province, H. Djafar Syah, a distant relative of the Sultan of Ternate, was ordained as the Sultan of Tidore. These two Sultans were not destined to become friends, but rather bitter rivals. Later, after the clash between them could not be hidden any longer, the rival faction in the DPRD fired the Sultan of Ternate as the Head of the DPRD.[6] Even Akbar Tanjung the Head of Golkar in Jakarta, became involved. He pressured the Head of the Indonesian

[6] See Bernas (January 28, 2000). According to some accounts, the faction of his opponents fired him after his supporters in the DPRD had been forced to flee. This additional information is from a member of the DPRD, whom I interviewed in Manado, in August 2000.

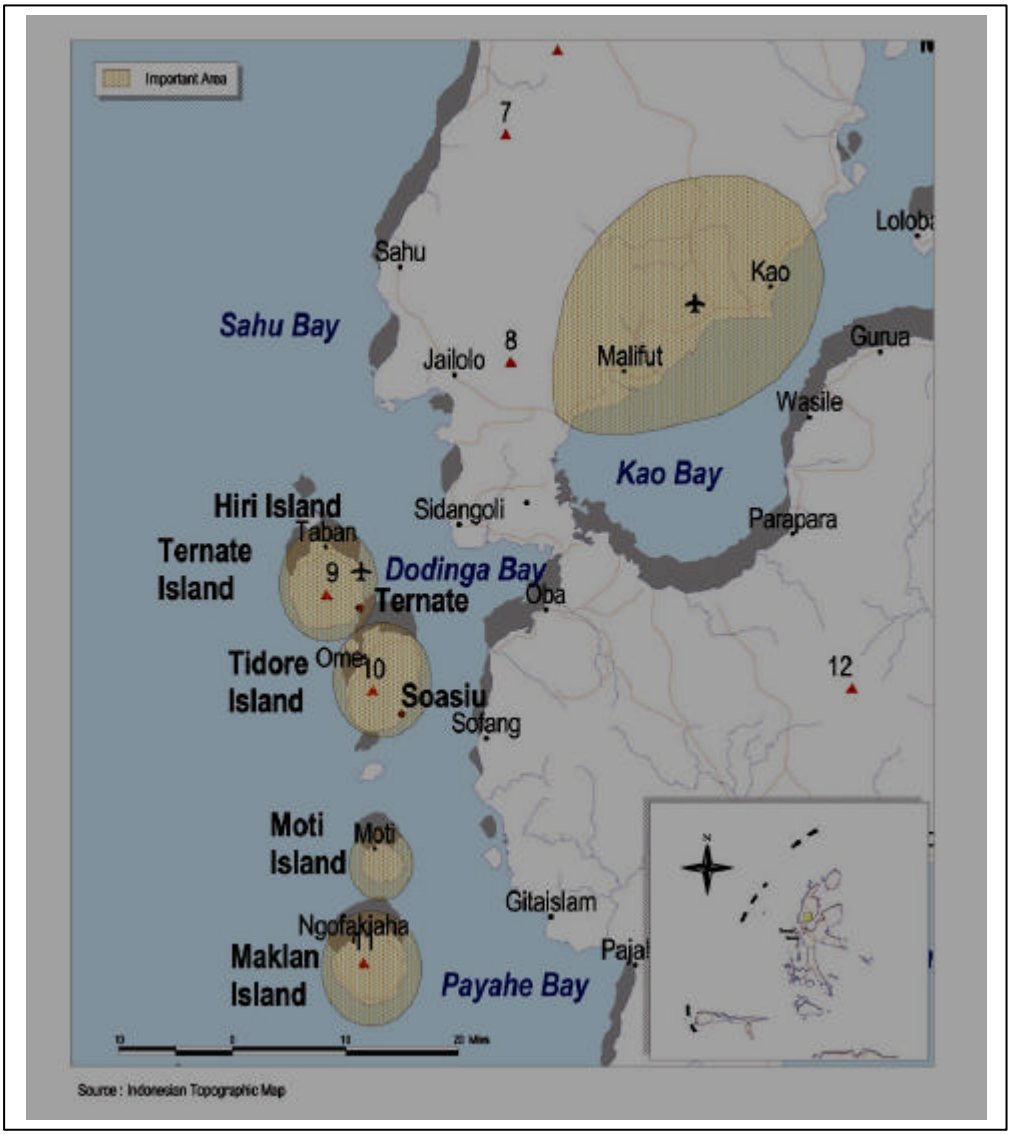
Police to condemn the Sultan of Ternate.[7] The Sultan of Ternate was accused of being a "provocateur" who sharpened the conflict between Christians and Muslims because of his own political ambitions (see Chapters V and VI).

When I arrived in August 1999, I heard five versions of the story about why fighting had broken out between the Kao and the Makian peoples. Although this conflict was the embryo of the violence that eventually engulfed the whole of the North Moluccas, it is interesting to note that none of the five stories I heard at this stage mentioned religion as a dominant factor in the violence.

Firstly, the government of the North Moluccas saw the tension as a territorial problem. In 1975, the Makians were moved from the island of Makian by the local government, to settle in the district of Kao. Kao is located in the interior, on the Southern portion of the upper wing of Halmahera. The Makians came from an island located close to the island of Tidore to the West of Halmahera. They resettled in the village of Malifut, in the region of Kao because the volcano on their island was threatening to erupt.[8] In July 1988, the volcano erupted and more people from Makian came to live in Malifut. The area controlled by the Makians had gradually expanded, and they were slated to take over another part of Kao, including five villages of the indigenous Kao people. The five villages of Kao are Gayok, Wangeotak, Malifut/Sosol, Balisosang and Tabobo. The Kao people felt very threatened when the provincial elite (dominated by Makians), issued Rules for Regional Government, PP 42, 1999, concerning the establishment of the District of the Makian in Malifut, including the five villages from the district of Kao. The Kao people felt this was illegitimate and counter to their historical rights and would further divide their land and their people. Therefore, not only the five villages, but also the whole of Kao rejected the government's approval of this decision (see Chapters V and VII).[9]

[7] Bernas, (October 9, 2000).
[8] See, Ternate Post, (November 2-8, 1999).
[9] See the letter, which was signed by sixty-four Kao leaders including religious leaders, traditional leaders, societal leaders and youth representatives on August 27, 1999. This letter was sent to the Head of the Regency of the North Moluccas in Ternate.

Map 2: The Location of Kao and Malifut Makian Daratan Districts



Secondly, according to people in Ternate with whom I met before going to Halmahera, the tension between Kao and Malifut (Makian) resulted from a struggle between political elites over who should be the preferred candidate for Governor in the anticipated new Province of the North Moluccas. The riots in Kao and Malifut were expected to affect the nomination of the Sultan of Ternate as one of the candidates for governor because the Kao people supported him while the Makian had their own candidate. The expansion of Malifut Makian Daratan challenged the authority and prestige of the Sultan of Ternate, who was traditionally viewed as the protector of Kao.

Thirdly, the Kao people considered the tension between the Makian people and themselves as a traditional tribal war, to be fought according to the traditions of their ancestors. Tribal warfare has a long tradition in Halmahera. They believed

that Kao was a federation of tribal groups that formed a single ethnic unity.[10] Another ethnic group now threatened this unity. When the violence first broke out, they fought by traditional rules, consistently attacked the people of Makian, but not their possessions, buildings or mosques. In the early part of the war, the Kao people didn't burn or loot the belongings of the Makian people because that would violate the traditional rules of tribal warfare. Since 10% of the Kao people were Muslim, they were careful to avoid any attacks of religious property or officials. In contrast, the Makian people played by different rules. From the first outbreak of violence, they burned the churches, schools and the houses of the two closest villages of the Kao people. By defining the conflict as religious in nature, they were able to appeal for help from outside (see Chapter VI). However the Muslims of Kao (10%), even today, remain united with the Christians of Kao (90%)[11], in opposing the Makian people (see Chapter VII).

Fourthly, as some people in Tobelo observed, there are deep cultural differences between the Kao and the Makian. Even a Christian resident of Tobelo who was sympathetic to the Kao people, acknowledged that the Makians were hard working, successful and intelligent people, who far outstripped the Kao in their ability to gain access to education, wealth and power. Their ethnic network organisation has been designed to give easy access to Makian people to compete well for positions within the modern institutions of the bureaucracy, military, government, business and education. The Makians are also strict Muslims. In contrast, the majority of Kao people still follow a very traditional lifestyle of hunting, gathering and simple agriculture, and are proud of their tradition of being warriors. Those who attempt to modernize their lifestyle find it difficult to compete in institutions dominated by the Makian. Many of the Kao who are officially Christian or Muslim, in fact still follow the religious practices of their traditional religion. The vacuum of power created in the transition period led to the outbreak of long-festering grievances between the two cultural groups.

Lastly, some people, including Muslims in Ngidiho, argued that the tension between the Kao and the Makian people was primarily an economic conflict over control of a gold mine. In 1998, an Australian company, named Nusa Halmahera Minerals coorporation with Indonesian Mining Enterprises (PT Aneka Tambang) which is a State Owned Enterprise (BUMN), made a sizable investment to develop a gold mining operation in Gosowong near the disputed area of the five Kao villages.[12] These five, Kao villages, including the mine, were designated to join the district of Malifut Makian Daratan at the instigation of a Makian controlled bureaucracy. The Kao people responded by saying if the decision were not reversed, they would drive all the Makian into the sea. My Muslim

[10] My interview with one of the Christian Kao leaders in Tobelo. Interview was conducted in August 1999. The confirmation of this point of view with the Kao people will be explained in Chapter VII.

[11] The Christians are divided into Protestant with the affiliation of GMIH (75%), Catholic (10%) and Pentecost (5%). GMIH is an acronym for *Gereja Masehi Injili di Halmahera* (The Christian Evangelical Church in Halmahera). See the report about the riot in Kao-Malifut Makian Daratan written by the Synod of GMIH, Tobelo: September 6, 1999.

[12] See Manado Post (January 5,2000).

informants in Ngidiho expressed some sympathy for the Kao people. They had also experienced the loss of control over their own land through the presence of the Banana Company, PT GAI in 1991. Some said that they would do the same thing as the people of Kao to protect their rights. However, by December 1999, Ngidiho and the whole of Galela were caught up the violence.

Complex factors influenced the rise of the conflict in 1999-2000. If the Sultans in the North Moluccas were part of an ancient kin-network, how did the conflict erupt among them and how did it suck the common people into the maelstrom of violence? In order to understand the potential conflicts latent in the Moluccan leadership requires a historical study of their relationships in the competition for power in the region since the colonial period. This book examines the history of religious conversions in the Moluccas and how they were used to create allies in the struggles for dignity and justice (see Chapter IV).

Kinship relationships are important in the changing society of Galela. Kinship and households are usually seen as categories of social group formation through biological reproduction, which perform the functions of cultural production, and actualise the daily needs of their members. However, kinship may also be understood in the larger sense of how the geographical range of an ego's social field is extended (Harris: 1990, 79). In this research I want to show how the inhabitants of an area are interconnected and what this mean for the exchange of loyalty, services and materials among them.

The extent of a person's social network is adjusted to fit the symbol system to which he or she refers. My research investigates the meaning inherent in relationships within or between the symbolic units of a culture. In practice, kinship is better understood as a type of normative commitment than as a subcategory of genealogical relations. Genealogical relations are not enough to bind people together. They need relationships based on familial idioms such as are found in sharing the same *adat* (traditional laws and customs), or the same religious practices. The formation of ethnic and religious institutions facilitates imaginative networks that are structured from the village level all the way up to regional and national institutions. The people find identity by allying with kin or religious networks, which are often structured by political and material interests that shape the loyalty of the people.

The above concepts help clarify why mounting tensions in Galela led to alienation between members of the same language, ethnic and village group. Even members of the same family who adhered to different religions were caught up in rival warring groups. Kinship relationships are facing a severe challenge in the society of the North Moluccas. People ask how the facts of biological relatedness, as we understand them, are significant in the new cultural realities, which they have to face. In the current crisis, religious affiliation usually supersedes kinship ties. Surprisingly, the case of the genealogical relationship between the Sultan of Ternate and the Sultan of Tidore, who share common blood as believed in the

myth of *Maluku-Kie-Raha*, and even adhere to the same religion, does not fit this explanation. The realities of a power struggle and political motivation for the creation of the idiom of *Maluku-Kie-Raha* may overthrow all kinds of ties (see Chapter IV).

1.5. Returning to Galela.[13]

Travelling to Galela, for me was like going home. During 1990-1993, I worked in this area at a community developmental project based in Tobelo. Carrying lots of questions concerning the nature of social change among the people of Galela, I went to Central Java to do further study. This brought me to conduct research in Galela on how the impact of developmental policies in the region affected changes in people's values and lifestyles (Risakotta: 1995a). With the opportunity for wider study, I have developed these issues into a PhD research project at ASSR-UVA that brought me back to the area in August 1999. However, this time, I didn't go to Galela by myself. My husband shared this returning home with me. There were plans to bring my supervisors to see the people and the land that had such a profound effect on my own personal growth. Unfortunately, only *Ibu* (or mother) Leontine Visser could witness the fieldwork I was doing in the early stages of my stay. The violence that broke out put an end to our plans.

Picture 1: Mount Tarakani, the Symbol of Galela. It is viewed he re from the Nothern part of the island.

[13] The name "Galela" according to local myth, comes from the word "*lela*" which means a flower "*lilla*". This was a favourite flower of *Sultan* Batjan. Therefore it was called "Gamlela". *Gam* means village and *lela* is the flower of lilla (de Jongh: 1909, 753).

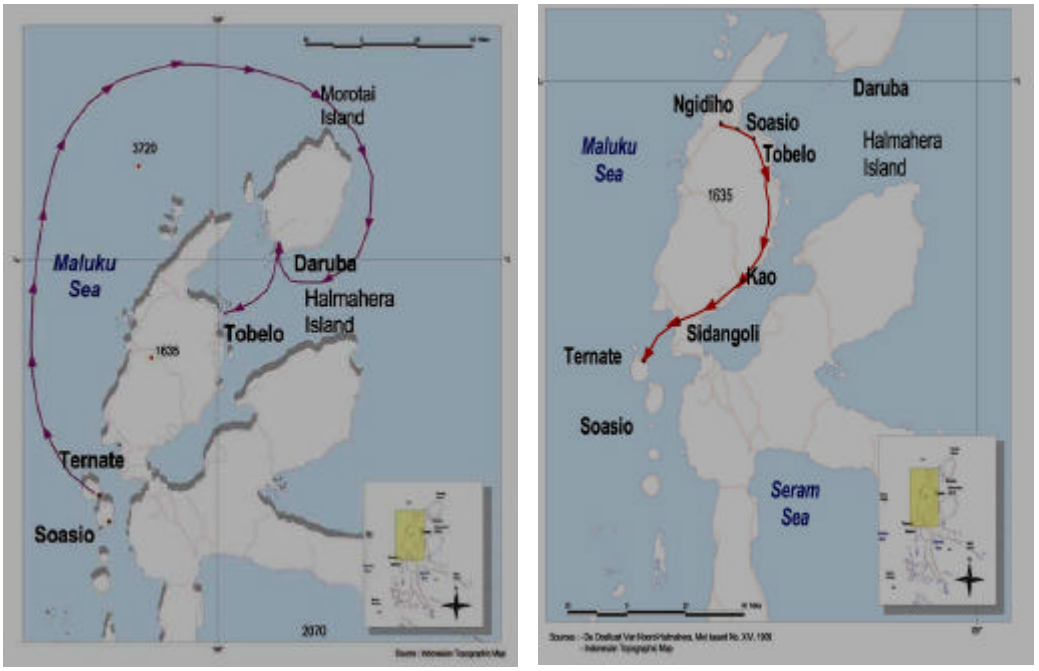
Inhabited by 31,227 people[14] at the end of November 1999, Galela with a landmass of 587.5 km2 is located on the North East of the left upper wing of the large island of Halmahera. This island faces the Pacific Ocean and is a gateway for world trade, providing an alternative to the trade link from Singapore to the countries of the world. This area is a part of the Pacific Belt Economic Development, which localises Menado-Bitung as the centre of integrated economic development in Eastern Indonesia (see Manajemen Stratejik,1999, 5).[15] Among the 353 islands in the Northern part of the Moluccas, Halmahera is the biggest. The old name for Halmahera was Almaeira, a word that is said to come from the language of Ternate "Alu Ma Eira", which means 'a base for boats' (Magany:1984:8).

Map 3: Galela and the Pacific Trade Lane

[14] See, The Religion Office (November, 1999).
[15] See also Kompas (October 17, 2000)

On our trip to the site of my field research, we found that the normal land route across Halmahera was blocked by conflict between the indigenous people of Kao, and the immigrant settlers who live in the Kao territory. The immigrants were the Makian people from the island of Makian Therefore my husband and I took a boat trip from Ternate to Tobelo, by way of Morotai, rounding the top of the Western tip of Halmahera. Taking a boat trip, gives a different feeling for the islands. We paid double to obtain a simple sleeping berth, because of the overwhelming number of passengers who were unable to use the road. The trip took about 24 hours, including a few hours stop in the sleepy town of Daruba on the island of Morotai. During World War II it was chosen as a launching point for the U.S. allied forces Pacific strategy, along with Pearl Harbour and the Philippines (cf Green: 1996). In Daruba, a huge old airbase, left over from World War II is still operated by the Indonesian Air Force. The roof of our sleeping place on the boat was too low to sit or stand up, so we spent many hours sitting on the front deck, watching the dancing performances of a school of dolphins, as islands slid by and the sky displayed many dramatic changes of weather, colour and light.

Map 4: Sea Routes from Ternate to Tobelo and The Trans-Halmahera Route



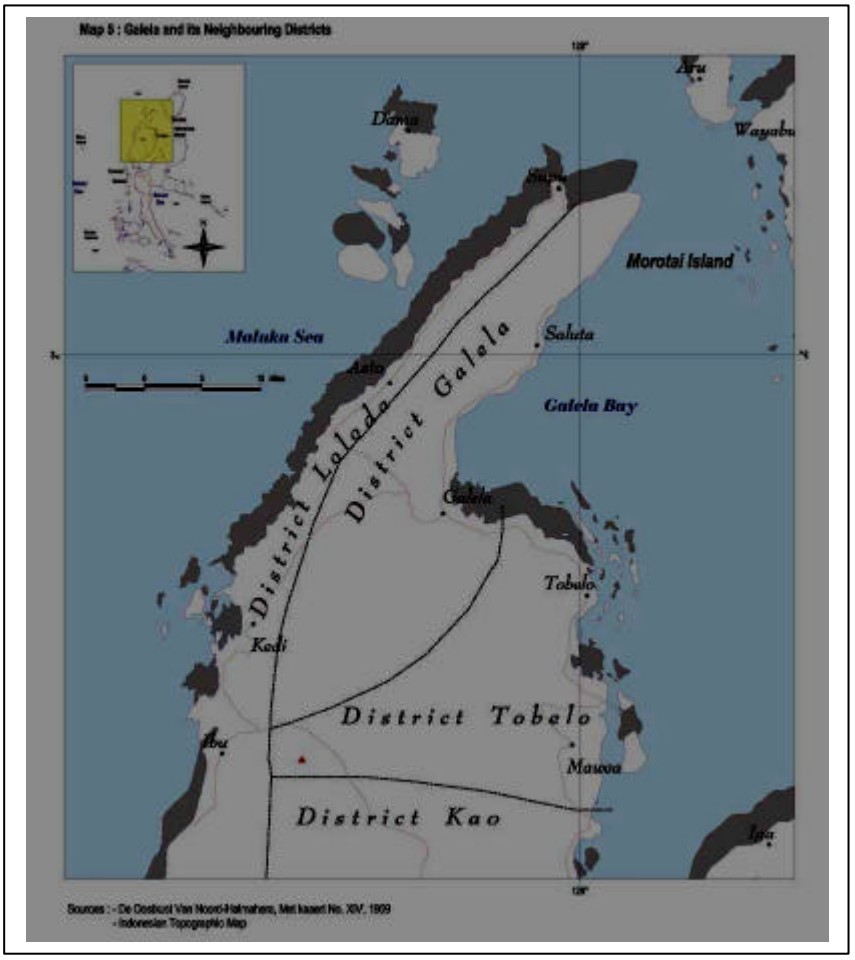
After a few days in Tobelo and Ngidiho, my husband returned to Java and I accompanied him as far as Ternate. By this time the trans-North Halmahera highway had just been opened by the military, but we had to rent a car to take us, as public transportation still did not dare make the trip. We were in the first vehicle to pass through the area, accompanied by an armed soldier in the more dangerous areas. Travelling from Ngidiho in Northeastern Galela to the Southern part of the North Moluccas in Ternate, we passed several districts such as Galela, Tobelo, Kao, and Jailolo. Entering the regions of district Kao and Malifut, we saw

many burned buildings and groups of people armed with spears and long knives. In the area of Kao, there were also magic amulets hanging by the road, evidence that this war was not just fought with physical weapons. Going through the Malifut district, several times we were stopped by local armed groups who searched our car for passengers who were native to Kao. Our soldier carried a big gun, which he poked at anyone who questioned our right to pass. Fortunately, the car made it through the area safely.

Picture 2: The road in the Kao – Malifut area, which was blocked with drums and stones, along with flags and bottles containing magic spells.

While writing about my experiences, I remember how I enjoyed my time in Ngidiho where the people were proud of their uniqueness as a village where Muslims and Christians lived peacefully together and a visitor could be drawn to love and to be loved during her or his stay with them. *Oom* Din welcomed me into his home with the explanation that a house is blessed if there are people staying in it. I still feel the truth of what *Oom* Din said about the blessing of his house. I lived as a member of his family, which included about 13 people living under one roof. This family was a starting point for me to understand the characteristics of households in Ngidiho during a period of a rapid agricultural modernisation, social turmoil and political tension (see Chapters III, VI and VII).

Map 5: Galela and its Neighbouring Districts



Staying with the family of *Oom* Din provided many opportunities for me to know lots of people. I made friends both inside and outside of the house. Besides his position as a member of Local Islamic Court (*Badan Sara*) at the Mosque, *Oom* Din is also a healer or *tukang obat* that in Galela is called a *Sou-Sou*. Because of this role, many people who were sick would come to his house to receive help. This also was a great opportunity for me to know them. Actually, I began to recognize the importance of rituals in the people's lives while staying at his house. At night, *Oom* Din frequently attended religious ceremonies conducted at the houses of other people. Surprisingly, he allowed me to come with him.

Picture 3: *Oom* Din, who is on the right, plays an important role in leading religious rituals for the village.

The organization of social life in Ngidiho is closely related to agricultural activities. Even though the primary occupation of some villagers may not be farming, their spare time is used for agricultural activities. Often people have mutiple jobs. They may be a traditional farmer as well as a laborer at the Banana Company or harbour. Or their main work is as a teacher or a mechanic, but they also farm their own land. Retired farmers who are too old to work often receive half the income from their children's labour on the family *raki* (plantation). Some villagers consider themselves pure, traditional farmers who only own their *raki* and *doro* (gardens). *Raki* is a traditional name for plantations, of perennial crops such as coconut, which provide security for their future. *Doro* or garden is the place where people plant annual subsistence crops such as rice and vegetables to live on as long as the coconut plants are not ready to harvest. *Raki* and *doro* may be used for the same field, depending on how they are planted for different purposes with different crops.

The people of Ngidiho have developed different ways to supplement their income since the Banana Company set up in the area. One day my motorcycle had a flat tire just before I went out of the house. There were some young men sitting on the bamboo bench under the tree in the front of *Oom* Din's house. I didn't know how to find somebody in the village to fix the tire. They said to me that I need not worry. Behind *Oom* Din's house there is the house of a mechanic who can lend a tire pump. They went to see him but came back with nothing because the owner said that the pump was broken. *Oom Din* was there too. He said to me, "*Ibu*, it is his work which he needs to make a living. Thus it is better for you to pay". His statement made me aware that present-day Ngidiho is not like a village ten years ago where money was not the centre of people's economic life. Quickly, I said that surely, I would pay. The young men returned to the neighbour's house again and soon came back with a miraculously fixed pump. The people in Ngidiho know how to make money to survive in their lives.[16]

[16] Tragically, the man who fixed my tire was killed in the violence in December 1999.

At different levels and time periods, over many centuries, the Galela people have been influenced by various agencies that introduced new crops and new divisions of labour. However, only in the recent past has there been developmental change, which depends on sophisticated technology like that used by PT GAI, the Banana Company. Even though the people have a complex classification system describing the stages of banana cultivation (see Yoshida:1980, 25),[17] in the past people didn't grow bananas for the local market. However, when the joint venture, PT GAI, an export-oriented multinational corporation (MNC) set up production in the area, it brought many new workers who came from far and wide. The total number of labourers at the end of November 1999 was 4,635 people. Half of labours registered themselves as villagers of Ngidiho although they were not indigenous and didn't even stay at the village. Most labourers stayed in simple houses, about 21 square meters, provided by the Banana Company. There were 1,365 houses available in November 1999.[18] Half of the labours originated from Galela, about 170 people were contract labourers from Java, and the remainder were from other parts of Indonesia, including the North Moluccas, (Tobelo, Makian, Kao, Sahu, Jailolo, Ternate, Tidore, Gebe, Morotai, Loloda, Buli, etc.), Manado (North Sulawesi), Toraja, East Timor, North Sumatra (Batak), West Papua and Ambon.[19]

The opportunity to sell bananas was bigger than before. Smallholder cultivation of bananas became one of the pillars of the household's economy since the middle of 1990's. Mother Iana (*mama* Iana), the wife of *Oom* Din, always brought their bananas to the market three times a week. If the family had an oversupply of bananas, *Oom* Din would ride his ox-cart to the housing complex of the banana labourers to sell the bananas. Usually the labourers would buy the bananas on credit, which is paid after they get their salary. Or they would barter for bananas with rice, which was taken from their supply given by the factory. In another chapter I discuss how people were involved within new systems of exchange, including food, money, coconut plantations, labour, etc., governed by market rules (see Chapter III).

1.6. Ngidiho: An Old Village

Ngidiho is an old village in a new province. The people narrated the history of the village to me in the following story. Long ago, a sister and a brother lived in Igobula, which is a village along the lake. When the sister got married and had to stay separately from her brother they agreed to build the house of the sister with a high roof so that her brother could see her from far away. Thus *pona natitiho* means a high roof where her brother could see the room of the sister from the other side of the lake. Ngidiho as a name, is said to come from this word *titiho*. The name of the village Ngidiho was changed to become Pattinama, which refers to the name of the head of Galela district who led the region before 1936. In the

[17] The stages of banana cultivation in the practices of the Galela people can be found in Yoshida (1980).
[18] My interview with the Personal Manager of PT GAI in Ngidiho, November 12, 1999.
[19] My interview with the Personal Manager of PT GAI in Ngidiho, November 12, 1999.

report of a Dutch administrator, the name of Ngidiho was still used until 1909 (de Jongh:1909, 758). After the year of 1936 when flooding damaged the old village location and the people moved to the current location, they still called their village, 'Ngidiho'.

People in Ngidiho are traditionally told this story. However, the location of the village has moved several times. The sister went to a village across the lake that was called "Longa." This was believed to be the place from where the Galela people first came.[20] At this village, the people lived in one long house called a *tahu lamo*. This house, or *bangsaha*, had eight corners (*pupuku tupangi*) in the shape of *sosaleta*, which means the construction was built from the centre out to the eight corners. But there was shameful accident that brought about a split in the village. In the process of constructing the building for worship a father-in-law fondled the breast of his *modoka* (his daughter-in-law), who was carrying traditional food on her head. This caused a clash in the village.

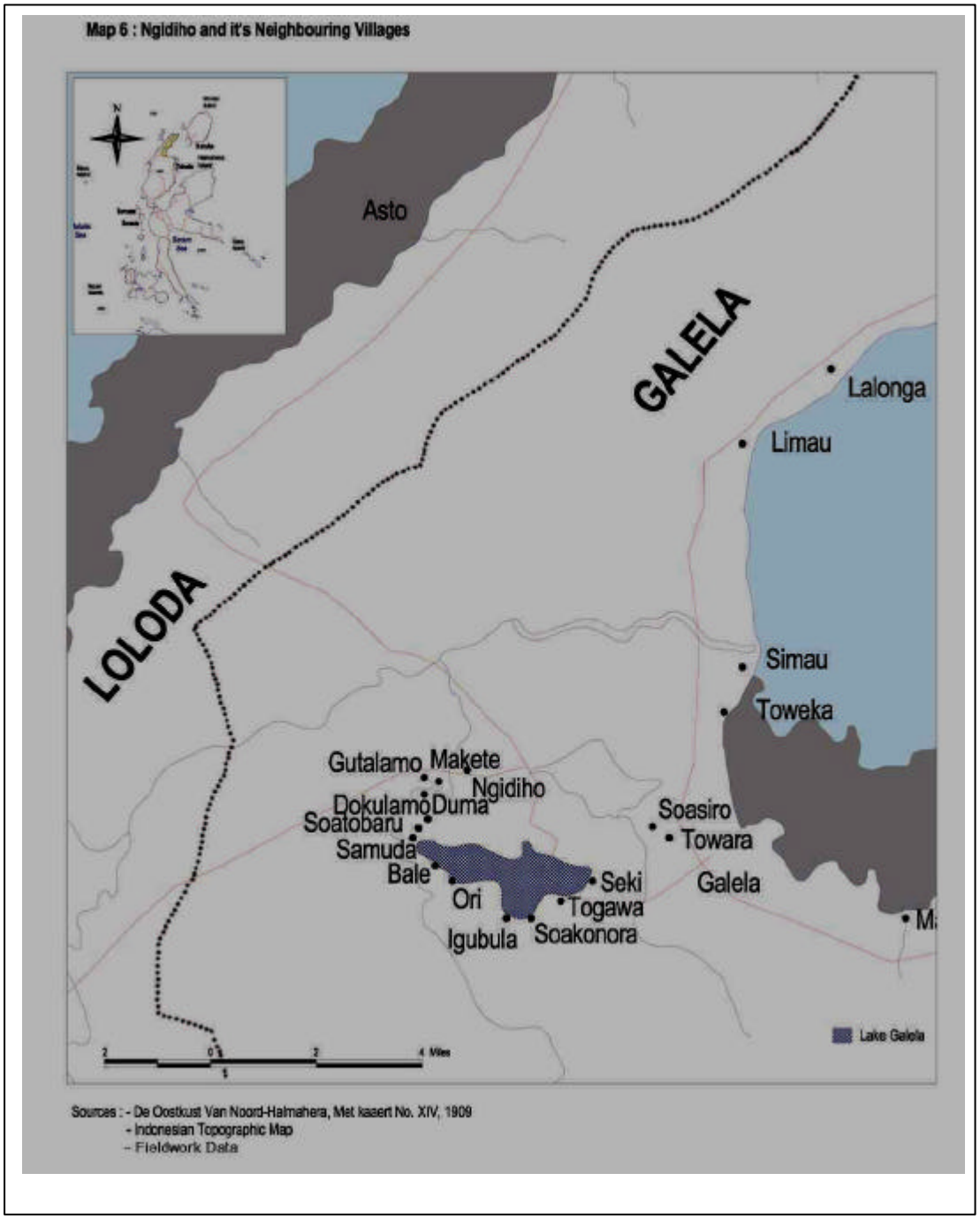
[20] Another source says that the people of Ga lela, Tobelo, and Kao came from the same area in the lake of Lina that lies in the hinterland between the border of the district of Tobelo and Kao (see Mangunwijaya:1987).

Pictures 4–6: *Oom Din* works in his banana planatation; Bananas are stored in the house before being delivered to the market; Mother Iana moves them to the side of the road to be ready to be taken to the market.

The family and people who sided with the accused man were asked to leave the village. They moved to another location in the North East coast of Galela that is now called Limau. Eventually the people who stayed at Longa also moved further along, down river to a place called Pattinama. Finally, as the result of river flooding, they moved to the current area and gave it the name Ngidiho. According to Naomichi Ishige, people from the village of Limau told the story differently (Ishige: 1980, 420). In Ishige's version, there were four brothers living together in Limau, a village located to the North East of the hinterland of Galela, along the coast. When one of the brothers went to the forest to make a canoe, another of them fondled the breasts of his brother's wife. Perhaps there was intercourse between them. As a result, a fight occurred between the brothers. The one who discovered his brother's adultery left Limau with a third brother and

moved to Ngidiho. Ishige tells this story to explain other practices among the people in Limau who still keep the statues of worship: the *kodoba*.

Map 6: Ngidiho and its Neighbouring Villages



Before the conflict that brought about the burning of the villages in Galela in December 1999, the people of Limau carved the form of a women's breast on the poles used in the construction of their *seri*. The *seri* is the sacred shrine where people place the statues of the fish hawk family (*kodoba*), which contain a couple of parents and their children. People believe that *kodoba* represents their ancestors. *Kodoba* was their totem. Ishige says that people now localise the *seri* in the back garden of a particular house because they feel ashamed to be seen still honouring the practices of the old, local religion. The sacred place is used as a timber storeroom but in its attic are two *kadobas*. Without protective walls, the 3.5 meter high structure of the shrine is placed on four posts that support a saddle back roof made of sago palm leaves (Ishige: 1980, 418). The *seri* is now just considered a memorial to their ancestors.[21] Once a year, the whole village does a ceremony to clean the *kodoba*. It is a big party where they perform a traditional dance (*ronggeng*). People line up in rows where all of their hands are tied together to form a tunnel for a virgin girl to walk through.

After only a few years living at the new location, in 1942, the Ngidiho villagers, like all of the people in Galela, fled from their village because of the Japanese occupation. Villages were burned to the ground. The only time when the Ngidiho people could stay for a longer period in their village was the period from the Second World War until December 27, 1999, when conflict led to terrible violence. According to official figures, the total number of people who lived in Ngidiho in December 1999, including those who worked at PT GAI, was 4,576 people. During my stay, the number of households who were living in the village was 230 households that included about 188 Muslim households and 42 Christian households. This is the number of households who own their own house in Ngidiho. This implies that the number of permanent residents in the main village was around 1,500 people.[22]

One night I visited the Head of Ngidiho (*Kepala Desa*) to discuss with him the total number of the people in his village. Instead of giving the number, he complained to me about the dual role of the village, which seemed unclear to him. Apparently, the territory of PT GAI is under the administration of three villages: Ngidiho in South, Simau to the East and Limau to the North East. However, the function of the villages was just to provide various recommendation letters or documents for the people who wanted to work at the factory. "The relationship between the village and the company is only a paper relationship", said the *Kepala Desa* with a resigned voice. Depending on the location of the labourers's housing, the village heads also help to issue personal documents such as birth certificates to keep track of the increase in the number of the people.

However, the three villages don't have a representative official to carry out the villages' responsibilities in the area of the banana plantation. The drawback is that when a labourer resigns, gets fired or otherwise loses his job, nobody comes to the village head to report the decrease of people in his village. Jurisdiction is

[21] cf. Ishige: 1980, 420.

[22] I was still working out the population census before I left the village at the end of November 1999.

sometimes controversial. Young people from Ngidiho occasionally made trouble by fighting with, or threatening the labourers. According to the company, the head of the village should be able to cope with these conflicts because he receives a monthly salary from the company from the banana plantation. [23] In one case the company called the head of the village to solve the problem.

Map 7: The Territorial Location of PT GAI

Reaching Ngidiho in the hinterland of Galela can be done in three ways. One is just to follow the business road, taking public transportation starting from the bus station in Soa Sio, the capital of the District (*Kecamatan*), that is located along the South coast. It only costs five hundred rupiah ($0.05), and within twenty minutes to half an hour, one will arrive in Ngidiho. During the drive, one will see

[23] My interview with the executive manager of PT GAI, Ngidiho, November 1999.

villages and people carrying out traditional agricultural activities, occasionally interrupted by the jarring sight of a fancy parabola antenna along side a simple thatched hut. The driver must be careful to watch for domestic animals, which suddenly cross the road.

Another possibility is to rent a motorbike, called an *ojek*, from the bus station. It costs five thousand rupiah ($0.50). Or one can rent a car, which is expensive, to take an alternative road along the lake of Galela cutting around the bottom of Mount Tarakani. Trucks, which deliver boxes of bananas to the harbour in Soa Sio where the exporting ships await their cargo, take this road. The views of nature, the lake, the coconut plantations and different kind of plants reward travellers who take this road. There is only one house located half way up the road. In less than fifteen minutes you arrive in Ngidiho. But the road is not as nice as the other one.

Thirdly, a rental car or ojek can bring one around past three villages along the South to the East coast namely Soa Sio, Toweka, Simau, to come to the hinterland of Ngidiho entering from Simau. Before the economic crisis in 1997 in Indonesia, one could fly from Jakarta to Ngidiho with connecting flights that included stopping over in Ternate for a day. Near Ngidiho there is an airfield inherited from the Japanese occupation. However, simple accommodations can only be found in Tobelo, a town and District to the West of Galela, about an hour's drive from the airport.

Ngidiho is located between Makete, a village inhabited by the Sangir people from North Sulawesi since the 1950s, and the big river called "Tiabo" that divides Ngidiho in the West from Limau in the North East. This river was the source of flooding in the past, which forced the relocation of the village. To the East of Ngidiho there is one close village, named Simau with its extended village called Toweka. Along the river to the East and the Southeast, the banana plantations are cultivated professionally by labours from PT GAI.

One day, when I was interviewing the manager of the company, I was invited to go up to the housing area of the executives of the company in Kokopola Estate. From there I could view the whole Southeast and Eastern area of Galela. The fertile landscape spread out before me. This, along with other prosperous industries in the North Moluccan area, is one of the most promising places in Eastern Indonesia. Only a few security buildings show up among the great sea of green. Up there, I began to relate what I was seeing to the stories people had told me about the great changes in their system of agriculture and how they tried to cope with the great challenges to their style of life.


Pictures 7–8: View of the Banana Plantation from the Kokopola Estate; The view of Mount Tarakani which is covered with coconut palms.

Only those who work for the company and the elites, who set up the project for the multinational agro industry in Ngidiho, know how important this area is. Even though Ngidiho or Galela were involved in large-scale banana cultivation, the area remained largely unknown, even to Indonesians, and far from the fame of a place like Bali, the most visited tourist spot in Indonesia. Only the recent bloody conflict has brought this lovely area into the spotlight of national and international news. Because of the violence that exploded in December 27,1999, Galela has become a household term, known to people all over Indonesia. I sometimes feel scared to let people in Java know that I used to live there. Families, my supervisors and close friends from all over the world were concerned and tried to reach us when they watched on television the horrifying stories of this great human tragedy.

In the beginning of August 1999, when I was in Ternate to arrange research permits from the government of the North Moluccas, before my departure to Ngidiho, an official said that I had come to the right place to observe the progress of development. The pride of the government official made sense because the crowd of workers at the time required increased transportation from Ngidiho directly to Ternate. For only Rp 35.000,- one could take a public bus, which goes back and forth between Ngidiho - Sidangoli. The bus taking the smooth road of the trans-North Halmahera Highway left Ngidiho at 3 AM to reach Sidangoli before the arrival of the first ferry at 9 AM from Ternate. Before the conflict occurred, crossing with a ferry from Sidangoli to Ternate back and forth can be conducted twice a day, in the morning and in the afternoon. It takes only an hour from Sidangoli to Ternate. For a little extra, one can take one of the frequent speedboats, which are more accessible than the ferries. Ternate is the capital of the new Province of North Moluccas. It is located on a small island to the West of the main island, Halmahera.

Even though Ngidiho is a relatively remote village, every morning before the sunrise prayer, the noise of buses, the voices of people and the passing of trucks,

which deliver workers or export products, awakened me. Because I used the front bedroom of *Oom* Din' house, which lies close to the noisy road, I felt like I was staying in Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia. It seemed like this village never sleeps.

1.7. Conclusion

This chapter locates my position as a researcher whose points of view are determined by my commitments to human rights and respect for religious beliefs and local practices in a particular culture. Ngidiho cannot be isolated from outside influences, including, developmental projects conducted by the Indonesian government, political changes in Jakarta and Ternate, economic competition and religious ideology. Economic and political changes create potential problems that can grow bigger when ethno-religious sentiments are used for a political means. The geo-political condition of the village of Ngidiho, with its links to regional, national and international networks helps explain the transformation of the people in the area since the colonial era up to the present. Multiple symbols, created through a long historical process of change, serve multiple purposes. Ritual practices are political tools that drive people, both to participate in violence, and to strive together for reconciliation.

Chapter II
Theories on Ritual and Politics

> "An anthropologist told me that his inhibition against exercising authority was so strong that his first fieldwork had to be made extremely difficult by his refusal to employ a servant. These very people, who prefer unstructured intimacy in their social relations, defeat their wish for communication without words. For only a ritual structure makes possible a wordless channel of communication that is not entirely incoherent" (Douglas: 1996, 51).

This dissertation is about the politics of ritual and its role in making and resolving conflict. Ritual can lead to violence or peaceful negotiations. When one wants to say something about a problem, then the process of the analysis should consider multiple perspectives to understand the object of study. The case study in this research is used to illuminate how the transformation of social practices in the everyday lives of people relates to the power struggles within and outside their community during the period before and after the 1999-2000 violence. Changes in the politics of ritual at a local level, such as a village, can be located within the larger scale of political struggles in Indonesia, during and after the Colonial Period.

This chapter discusses the basic design of my research on the politics of conflict in which ritual appears both to distinguish and to unite people. This chapter begins with a deconstruction of the epistemology that lies behind some of the contemporary theoretical debates in Moluccan studies. Then I will map several theoretical approaches that lie behind my selection of the particular perspectives in this study. This analysis sketches a picture of the whole discussion on ritual and politics in Indonesia. Analysis of ritual is based on the stories told by the people in Ngidiho. This chapter ends with an explanation of how I interpreted and theorized the data and how I used the methodologies that are employed in this research.

2. 1. Theoretical Approach to Research

It is impossible to conduct research in the Moluccas today without examining the role of religion in the present social conflict. However, it is too simple to reduce the situation to just a matter of religious conflict. This research searches for a different perspective and a comprehensive discourse that can map the continuities in the social transformation of the Moluccan society.

People articulate the meaning of their lives and transform their reality as part of a large-scale civilising process that gradually alters their practices. Structural changes in society alter both its appearance and its essence. This can be seen in

the different stages of change, which affect societal institutions such as households, kinship relations, trade links within and outside villages and relations with larger structures such as the state. In the following section I will discuss three foundations for my research: Epistemology, Analytical Tools, and Theoretical Perspective.

2.1.1. Epistemology

In relation to Galela as a field of study, there are several resources available.[24] Since the violence began in 1999 in the Moluccas at large, there is an increasing need for comparative study of the region. The field of study should link local and global contexts in order to understand the dynamics of conjunctural change that the people face (Appadurai:1996, 185). The Moluccas are a rich resource for this kind of study.

In Moluccan studies, several approaches are employed. Early missionaries who were ethnographic anthropologists used functionalist and structuralist approaches to the study of Northern Halmahera. In contrast, recent studies focussing on the South Moluccas are more post-modern (see for example Mearns and Healy: 1996).[25] Linda Sun Crowder and Patricia Horvatich criticize the anthology, *Rituals and Socio-Cosmic Order in Eastern Indonesian Societies* edited by C.Barraud and J.D.M.Platenkamp for not considering the political and social context that gave rise to the rituals (Crowder and Horvatich:1992, 23-136). Structuralism tends to focus on effectively "isolated" social units or symbolic forms and not pay attention to political or economic aspects of contemporary experience in Moluccan communities, such as the impact of developmental projects on the society (Mearns and Healey:1996, 2). In my study, rituals are analysed at different political layers that are located within a historical narrative that influences both their meaning and presentation.

Rituals "make and unmake" a society, but their meaning can only be understood in relation to the political economy of the society. Similarly, an approach that studies the role of the state in changing the people's lives without discussing the process of social change within a long historical context is also problematic. People weave together new meanings in coping with the long history of change in their everyday political practices and institutions as the result of outsider intervention.

Some studies are critized because they build upon the concept of 'development' and reflect a modernist hegemony about the way people think and act (Mearns and Healey:1996). However, the post-modern critique used in some contemporary

[24] From historical, anthropological studies and developmental studies, the names include van Baarda (1908, 1917), de Jongh (1909), Ishige (1980), Lapian (1981), Chauvel (1986), van Fraassen (1987), Mangunwijaya (1987), Platenkamp (1988), Baker (1988), Visser (1989), (1994); Andaya (1993a), Kiem (1993), Masinambow (1994), Risakotta (1995a), Schuurman (1995), Ajawaila (1996), Djurubasa (2000), Prabojo (2000) and etc.

[25] Ortner criticizes a political economy approach as problematic due to its construction of history, which is not about "the history of that society but the impact of (our) history on that society" (Ortner:1994, 387).

studies usually comes out in the form of critiquing and deconstructing fictions (Barth:1993, 7), rather than focusing on the shaping process of the social organisation and knowledge of the people. A neo-Marxist political economic paradigm in ethnographic studies is problematic because of the lack of attention to the process of research, in which "etic" and "emic" perspectives are kept in appropriate proportions.[26] With awareness of the limitations of each theoretical approach, I choose an ecclectic method that draws insights from both structuralism and post-modernism, but focuses primarily upon the long history,[27] knowledge, discourses and practices of the local people.

Structuralism is helpful for understanding how cultural meanings are constructed into practices. However, to understand how people cope with change, we must elaborate both their legacies from the past and how they respond to new developments in their lives.[28] People's acts and practices can be interpreted with the help of an understanding of the structures of their inherited knowledge (see Barth:1993, 319). On the other hand, structuralism in some of the ethnographic reports written by missionaries, colonial politicians and scholars, often portrays the local people based on the imagination of the authors and not on what the people understand about themselves.[29] The ethnographic constructions of the past that are recognised as histories, were built according to the fashions of scholarship of their time and place (Fernea:2000, ix). Post-modernist critiques deconstruct

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[26] Carol M.Eastman discusses the terms *etic* and *emic* as either an approach proposed by Marvin Harris or as an interpretation proposed by Kenneth Pike (Eastman: 1984, 17-19). *Emic* is an approach for articulating the world of the natives "as the natives see it" (Harris: 1968, 316). This is based on the assumption that the actor is able to know his own inner state (Harris: 1968, 576). The knowledge about the actor's inner state helps the observer to understand the presentation of the actor's behaviour and to describe the behaviour in the stream of events in which the actor participates (Harris: 1968, 574). It is an epistemological formulation about the actor's notion of what is significant, real, meaningful, or appropriate (Harris: 1968, 575). According to Pike, *emic* represents to us the view of one familiar with the system and who knows how to function within it himself, while an *etic* system may be set up by external criteria or a 'logical' plan whose relevance is external to the system being studied (Pike: 1967,38-39).

[27] Actually within structuralism, there is a developed study in which attention to cultural or social change is taken into account. Material conditions affect the rearticulating of new meanings in their formulation of the same basic structural ideology (MacCannell and MacCannell: 1982).

[28] I would like to express thanks for the interesting lecture given by Prof. S.Sanjay Subrahmanyam from Centre d'Etudes de l'Inde et de'Asie du Sud, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales in Paris. Titled "Forcing the doors of Heathendom: Ethnography, Violence, and the Dutch East India Company", the lecture was delivered at the 13th Wertheim Lecture of the Centre for Asian Studies Amsterdam/Amsterdam School for Social science Research (ASSR) in Amsterdam, June 25, 2002. Another lecture organised by ASiA, Platform for Asia Studies in Amsterdam in June 24, 2002, with the title "Celebrating or Commemorating the VOC," prompted a valuable discussion with Prof. Subrahmanyam about some important resources that I use in Chapter IV, regarding the presence of Portuguese expeditions in Asia.

[29] Theoretically, a Gramscian understanding of hegemony helps explain the turning point of each movement in the society as it is observed through discourse and ritual practices. To some extent, a ritual action can be categorised as part of a discourse. As a definition, discourse is a way of constituting knowledge; together with the social practices that forms subjectivity and power relations among different agents (Weedon: 1987, 108). Hegemony theory combined with observations of practices and discourses helps to deconstruct the use of power within ritual politics. A dynamic analysis is used for understanding how new symbols are created based on

imaginative narratives of ritual that conceal the power relations invested in various actors in the society including the power discourse made up by the colonizers and post independence elite governments.[30] My dissertation will argue that ritual is a potent tool for negotiating political and economic conflicts. In brief, this research analyses rituals within their historical and political contexts, starting from the level of practices within families and villages, up to the level the Indonesian state as an imagined community conceived of as one great family.

2.1.2. Tools of Analysis

This dissertation takes a concrete approach in discussing ritual. Instead of beginning with the complex theoretical debate on the definition and meaning of ritual, I begin with a living narrative of ritual practices in the village of Ngidiho, District of Galela, Island of Halmahera, Province of North Moluccas, Indonesia. Of course I do not claim that this narrative encompasses all the meanings of ritual that occur in Ngidiho. But a concrete narrative helps me to construct a working definition of ritual and to compare it later with the results of other theoretical discussions of ritual that are examined in this chapter. This approach also helps us to listen to and imagine the real context of the people who are engaged in ritual.

Narration is a tool of analysis that shows the different stages in a dynamic ritual practice. In all seven chapters, I begin the analysis with a narration that shows the power relations among the actors. I locate the analysis of ritual action in a bigger frame, which shows the interweaving of elements in the ritual performance. The stories of ritual performances are followed with a thick description of the conditions and reasons behind the event. This description doesn't mean to separate ritual action as a political event from ritual as a cultural creation produced by a person, collective or institution. The narration is only a tool for understanding that the total meaning of a ritual action includes both the ideology it expresses and the material conditions which it negotiates. These two aspects cannot be separated.

This interpretation is strengthened by showing the dynamic process by which the people (and the researcher) build up their knowledge through participating in ritual practices. A narration helps show that in the real actions of human beings, historical time functions normally even though 'total meaning' may be created simultaneously for the people who experience a sacred moment during the ritual. A ritual event is a cultural production that the people use to cope with crises in their life.

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material condition and how a hegemonic condition is transformed into practical action. The same analysis can be use to understand the political legitimacy created by the Indonesian leadership through imposing Pancasila as a state ritual. However, the collapse of the Indonesian economy revealed the bankruptcy of the state hegemony (see Chapter V).

My interpretations of rituals are grounded in a basic assumption of my research that my purpose is to understand the people's own story of their lives. My understanding, whether drawn from empirical fieldwork or secondary accounts, is always part of a larger framework of understanding that I bring to the work.[31] Considering the process of interpretation, I have to admit that my description of reality is influenced by my particular values, the boundaries of my research and the limitations of my capability to locate the subject of analysis in a comprehensive point of view (see Chapter I).

In the following description, I narrate the story of a wedding party as I observed it in 1999 during my fieldwork in Ngidiho, continued by an account of the events that led up to the rituals within the wedding party. The drama of the wedding rituals in Ngidiho is one of the elements that inspired me to study the politics of ritual among the Ngidiho people before and after the religious conflict in the North Moluccas.

2.1.2.1. *The Wedding Party*

The party takes place under a roof constructed of iron sheets which lies over the road at the side of the family's house. It is full with villagers from Ngidiho as well as outsiders. Crowded with hand clapping women and men, the dance plays out a fascinating ritual. The bride and the groom are carried around the circle of the dancers. No rejection, no complaint, and no expression are seen on the bride and groom's faces that might betray the tensions that have gone before. Dancers are still rotating while cheering them on. The bride and groom keep very still, because on the top of their hair there is lots of money that was placed by all the dancers involved in the game.

Picture 9: Dancers at *the wedding party* place money in the hair bun of women in the circle of dancing (*tombo-tombo*).

[31] cf. Appadurai:1996, 182.

The father of the groom shares in the play. He is dancing with two 50,000 rupiah bills.[32] Rhythmically, he slides from the newlyweds to the mother of the bride. He is dancing with two hands holding the money. Like a soft handkerchief, he carefully places the money on the hair bun of the woman *(tombo-tombo*). The music becomes faster and more dynamic. People are laughing and shouting to see the scene. Then the woman dances out of the circle. Suddenly, she disappears. Where has she gone? I wonder. "Let's dance, bow, and stretch out our hands!" the leader of the dance calls out loudly. With their eager faces, people are waiting for a surprising moment that is about to happen.

Somebody is directing me to look towards the road. The mother of the bride is gently entering the circle of dancers. With a lively, gentle smile, the happiness is bright on her face. She is carrying a rolled up colourful mat, almost as tall as she is. Her body moves beautifully with the mat while holding it under her armpit. The spirit of the dance seems to return. The men's clapping hands welcomes her to join the stream of the dance. Now she seems to enjoy the play and becomes the centre of attention for the whole community. She is dancing towards the father of the groom. Adroitly, she opens the mat and wraps it around the man's body *(mikoloro)*. Then this mat man is dancing agilely, following the flow of the circle of dancers.

People look up at him with understanding. An informant told me that it is "always wiser to solve the tensions when they are hot", as in the Galelan saying, *sahu-sahu sidoloho damala kada gasi*, which means, "When it is hot, is better than after it becomes cool. Music is still playing and new faces join the dance. The mat wrapped man is dancing out of the circle to reach his wife somewhere among the audience. They are smiling together. This moment is called in Galela terms *toposero,* which is an interlude in the dance *(ronggeng denge)*. The bride's family holds the mat and wraps it around the whole family of the groom who is in the circle of the dance. The mat can be moved out if the groom's family give some money to their opponent in the play.

2.1.2.2. An Interlude

As the story tells us, the father of the groom put some money first on the hair of the bride's mother. After the party was over I wondered about the meaning of the scene. An elder in the community explained to me that it was not a common practice in Galela. How could it be? However, I only started to understand the meaning of the play when I reflected back on the moment of tension[33] between the two families just before the party was held.

This wedding story tells about the power relations among the people. The wedding party is an imaginative ritual in which each family gives meaning to its roles in the community. The people themselves know that a shift in the common

[32] Rp. 50,000 are currently equal to less than 6 Dollars, however in the context of the Halmaheran economy it is considered quite a lot of money, perhaps similar to 100 Dollars or more in the Netherlands. In Halmahera Rp. 50,000 is almost equal to a week's wages for a labourer.
[33] See the larger context of the story under 2.1.2.3.

practices of the dance relates to a political bargain between the two families. The common practice is that the family of the bride and the family of groom dance together. The bride's family first takes several colourful mats, wrapping them in a circle around the family of the groom. The groom's family will be freed after they give some money to the bride's family.

This wedding party symbolizes and realizes the political negotiations in the daily life of the common people. Power and compromise is expressed by the sublimation of each individual of the community in reaching reconciliation between the families as they had different expectations before the party. The symbols and models of bargaining about power amaze me as an ethnographer. The story behind the scenes is deeper than I thought, before I had time to reflect on my field journal. The following account is adapted from my field notes.

2.1.2.3. Before the Party

Emang, a fifteen-year boy who dropped out of junior high school, and Maila, a fourteen-year girl who had not finished elementary school, were thought by the families to be too young to get married. The families worried about their close relationship. Both families agreed to watch out so that the two children didn't meet each other too often. If they were ever caught together by the people, they would be forced to marry under the *Badan Sara,* which is the local Islamic Court. To convince the two young people that they must be married within one year, after coming of age, the two families made their vows to each other and arranged the marriage. The plan was set for March 2000 when the groom's second uncle returned from his hajj pilgrimage to Mecca. At the meeting, it was agreed that the groom's family would pay a bride price of one million rupiah[34], fifty-kilos of rice, twenty kilos of sugar, fifty kilos of flour and twenty kilos of oil.

Only two weeks before *the wedding party* actually took place, the two families met again and re-discussed the plan of their children's marriage. The girl's family felt forced to speed up the marriage ceremony. The mother of the girl told me that she worried constantly, because her daughter returned home almost every night in the early morning. She wondered why nobody caught them and brought them to *Badan Sara* to be married as in traditional practice. It seemed to me that she was very frightened that her daughter would be caught with her boy friend and delivered to the *Badan Sara*. I wondered why? At a second meeting, the date of the wedding was rescheduled for the end of October 1999, giving a little time for the boy's family to collect money from their copra harvest. The bride wealth was reduced to five hundred thousand rupiah, twenty-kilos of rice, twenty-five kilos of flour and ten kilos of cooking oil and no sugar.

However, two days after the second meeting between the families, the mother of the girl reached the end of her rope regarding the couple's sexual activity. In the early morning before the sunrise prayers *(subuh),* when her daughter had once again just returned home from a night with her boyfriend, the mother forced her

[34] One million rupiah equals less than 120 Dollars, but is a very large amount of money for the poor people of Halmahera.

daughter to go with her and dropped her off at the boy's house. When the family woke up, they were surprised to see her there. Without any explanation from the girl's mother, the boy's father assumed that her delivery to their house meant that her parents wanted their daughter to be married that same day. Nurman, the father of the boy, directly came with the girl to his elder sister's house where I was staying. She would stay there until her status became clear while they discussed this new problem. He asked his brother-in-law, *Oom* Din who is one of the spiritual and social leaders of the village, to visit the girl's family and ask them what was their plan regarding this new phenomenal complication among them.

The involvement of *Oom* Din, the husband of Nurman's elder sister (Iana), made this story even more complex. Three times, *Oom* Din went back and forth to negotiate with the girl's parents. At around eight in the morning of September 25, 1999, *Oom* Din came first to the girl's father who apparently didn't object to having his daughter married that evening in the house of *Oom* Din. The girl's mother, after bringing her daughter to the boy's house, had left for work at the banana plantation. In the early afternoon, *Oom* Din went back to the girl's house. Someone from the boy's family had heard that the girl's family interpreted the involvement of *Oom* Din, as related to his status as a member of *Badan Sara* rather than as an uncle of the boy. This story was taken seriously not only by *Oom* Din, but also by the whole extended family of the Budimans who were the largest extended family in Ngidiho.

There were two interpretations that came out of the ensuing discussion in he living room of *Oom*'s Din's house. They led him to return to the girl's house for further negotiations. *Firstly,* if the girl's family blamed the boy's family for hiding his relationship with the girl, then the girl's family could prosecute the boy's family at the *Badan Sara*. That meant that the *Badan Sara* could decide that the boy's family had to pay a fine to the girl's family, and renegotiate the marriage agreement. In that case, the control of the young couple would become very strict.

Secondly, if the *Badan Sara* decided that the fault came from both families, then the cost of a rush wedding ceremony would have to be shared together. The girl's family would not accept this because they would lose the bride wealth and have to spend it all for *the wedding party* of their daughter, without reaping the benefits of the help that was owed them.

According to tradition, the bride's family should have held a party for their daughter before she was taken to the house of the groom's family. The elimination of this party was a significant loss for the family of the bride, because they had already stored up obligations from the village to pay for the party. By their donations and help at other community weddings, they had a right to expect the same help in return at their daughters wedding.

Only later did I understand why the girl's family was so careful in dealing with the tension over *Oom* Din's involvement. If the *Badan Sara* were involved it would affect significant economic interests, as well as family status.

The result of their discussion was that both families agreed *Oom* Din's presence in this process was not to be seen as involvement of a member of the *Badan Sara* but rather as an uncle of the boy. Therefore, they agree that the wedding arrangements should not bring them to the formal authorities of the village. *Oom* Din managed to persuade the father of the bride to accede to the need of the Budiman family to avoid the shame and potential economic loss of dealing with the *Badan Sara.*

While *Oom* Din was working to fix the wedding process, the boy's family from all over the village were coming to Iana's house, the sister of Nurman, to prepare food for the wedding ceremony that night. Nurman was walking around the house carrying a *jojobo* book, which is used to write down all the people's names, that came to help and who brought donations for *the wedding party.* The kind and amount of "work" or support (*jojobo*) contributed are strictly recorded to be weighed against future ritual and material exchanges.

Quickly, I saw that there was a tremendous amount of cooking ingredients necessary for preparing the food. However, while making a joke, a woman who was cooking said that this was just a *pesta roti goreng* (fried bread party) because of its simplicity. Into this crowded, festive and joyful atmosphere that surrounded the anticipation of a big wedding ceremony later that night, came some shocking news. In the late afternoon, the mother of the bride returned from her work at the banana agro-business and announced that a formal marriage event could not be conducted so soon. She said that she wanted her daughter to be married immediately but that in line with Muslim customs, the wedding had to be held at the bride's house. She was angry with her husband who seemed to support the plans for a rushed marriage.

Palpable anxiety floated to the surface and seared the emotions of the people gathered from the groom's family. They were disturbed by the personal reaction of the girl's mother. According to Galelan Muslim traditions, the marriage could not be held if the bride's father or his official representative (*wali*) did not conduct the wedding ceremony. The groom has to be approved by the girl's father or his *"wali"*.

A ritual in which the bride's father or *wali* must approve of a prayer recited by the groom symbolizes this. The marriage ceremony is only valid after the groom is able to reproduce the wedding prayer, exactly as it has been prayed by the father of the bride (or the *wali*). The groom must carefully duplicate the rhythm of the prayer, as well as the back and forth movements of his hands that are tied opposite to the hands of his father-in-law (or *wali*) in a crossed position. Sometimes, at other weddings I witnessed, this process had to be repeated many times before it was legally approved. Therefore, the worry of the boy's family made sense in the context of the whole drama of this rush wedding. The mother of the girl could use this trump card to cancel the ceremony.

Picture 10: The hands of the groom are tied with the hands of his *wali* or father in law.

Once again, *Oom* Din visited the girl's house with a new proposal from the boy's family, i.e., that the wedding ceremony could be moved to the house of the girl's parents. The mother of the bride rejected this vague suggestion from *Oom* Din. "I am unprepared to hold a wedding party!" *Oom* Din related her reply to the groom's family. They were all gathered at his house to listen to the story of his efforts to convince the girl's family that they must hold the ceremony that day. "But the feast that is being prepared at my house can be moved here, to your house," *Oom* Din told her. Now there was a smile on the weathered face of *Oom* Din, as he told the story. People laughed. They felt that *Oom* Din was winning the political ritual of negotiation.

Of course the mother of the girl could not accept this new suggestion from *Oom* Din, because it violated her traditional responsibility to put on the party. But apparently agreement was near. With a proud voice, *Oom* Din related that the mother of the girl only asked for the bride wealth, as it had already been promised, but with one additional item, namely a roll of cotton cloth, to be delivered soon. Implicitly this constituted an agreement to hold the wedding ceremony and initial celebration that night, at *Oom* Din's house. In fact, the bride's family not only experienced shame that the ceremony and initial party were not held at their house, but also lost their chance to receive the favours "owed" to them by the community.

The marriage ceremony was held simply and well. The bride looked beautiful, wearing a traditional set of clothes including one of my sarongs.[35] I dressed her up and applied make-up to her face. Because she was cast away from her family to the boy's house in the early morning, I felt deep sympathy for her. I allowed her to stay in my room and I decorated it nicely, as is the custom for a bridal room. Surely, she looked happy, but, in the evening, I could see the sadness on her face,

[35] " Sarong" is a traditional cloth that is worn as a long skirt.

because of the conflict with her parents and their absence at this very important moment in her life. A *wali* of the family was sent by the bride's parents to bless the couple's marriage.

While the preliminary "fried bread party" continued that evening, the father of the boy led a discussion among the guests who were all men. Guests came from Ngidiho and some extended family members came from neighbouring villages. The majority of the family is Muslim, but some of them are Christians. The Muslim and Christian immediate family members all lived in Ngidiho. They were all now at the hurried party, talking, laughing and planning for the great wedding celebration that would take place in a few days time. Besides the bride, I was the only woman who sat around with the men. I was permitted because of my special status as a researcher. There were some women who stood watching from the back door and many more women were in the kitchen. All of the people agree to have a great, traditional party to welcome their *modoka* (daughter-in-law) into the extended family of the Budimans.

There was another reason for the groom's family to plan a remarkable party. The community of Ngidiho felt empathy for the bride's family. *The wedding party* was planned as a healing process to address their own guilt for not having the bride's family attend the ceremony. At the same time, it would be the moment when they could announce their presence as an influential family in the village. In the discussion that night, one of the family members said, "Because this marriage has reformulated the nature of betrothal gifts from our family, we have to make a lively party to entertain the entire village."

Oom Din assured me that this would be the biggest party that I had ever attended, and it was true. I was asked by the people from the wedding committee to make the invitations for the party. Later, *Oom* Din and I created an inexpensive, interesting invitation, which was duplicated through a mimeograph machine I used at the Synod office of the GMIH church in Tobelo. The meeting ended with the conclusion that each household who had a family tie to the groom should contribute twenty-five thousand rupiah for the party.

It took five days and the work of many people to prepare for the party. The bride's parents wanted the parents of the groom to visit them to talk about betrothal gifts. The bride's family could not accept the presumption that was discussed among the groom's family, that the bridal gifts should be deleted because it was a rushed marriage. However, until the last day before the *wedding party*, the groom's family had still not made the customary visit to the house of the bride's parents to bring gifts. Early in the morning on the day of the great party, mother Iana whispered to me the scandalous news that the bride had left the house of her parents-in-law to go back to the house of her parents. "She threatens that she will refuse to be picked up by her husband's family for the traditional ceremony of cleaning her feet *(tiodo*)." This was the only explanation I was given. While shrugging her shoulders, mother Iana left me alone, puzzled.

The foot washing ritual is an important event. The *modoka* can only be accepted formally into the groom's family after this ceremony is complete. Eventually I learned the meaning of the bride's refusal. She felt that the betrothal gifts had already been promised to her family. She was willing to change her mind and attend the *tiodo* if her husband's family would deliver the betrothal gifts to her parents, before the traditional foot washing ritual was started. Once again the whole process was in crisis.

I suggested to the groom's family that they should just fulfil the request of the bride's family. However they did not respond. In the afternoon before the *wedding party* the bride became meek and agreed to attend the foot washing ceremony *(tiodo)*. Nevertheless, I was quite sad to see that the groom's family had not yet made the customary visit to their new "family-in-law's" house. If they did not visit their new in-laws, it seemed unlikely that the bride's family would attend the party. I felt like the party would lose its excitement and interest for me if the bride's family members did not attend.

The ritual of *tiodo* was done one hour before the party was scheduled to begin. After the ceremony, I went home to rest because I felt tired and sad. I knew I would be expected to dance all evening long with them. I slept for two hours and came to the party a little bit late. The music floated out like wind, calling people to come to the source of the sound. I quickly dressed in the traditional costume that the bride had worn for the religious marriage vow ceremony a few days before, and half ran through the darkness to the party. To my great surprise, the two parents of Maila, the bride, were there. They were smiling to welcome me. I wondered, what had happened to change the situation?

Soon it dawned on me that my suggestion to the groom's family was inappropriate and could not be accepted by the family. Apparently, they had their own way to solve the problem. They picked their own time to visit the parents of the bride. After the ceremony of *tiodo*, the groom's families brought three parcels of beautifully plaited, dry fish that are traditionally called *damaha*, to the parents of the bride. Two 'second grandmothers' (grand aunts), of the groom were sent to deliver the gifts. Along with delivering the parcels, they invited the parents of the bride to attend *the wedding party* of their granddaughter. The bride's family answered that they would accept the invitation if the parents of the groom came in person to invite them. The two delegates went home to deliver the message.

Not long after that, the groom's parents finally visited the bride's family. As gifts, they brought a roll of white cotton cloth, a dozen plates and a little money. They spent some time enjoying each other's company and engaged in polite conversation. When the groom's parents left the house, they carried reciprocal gifts of food, given by the bride's parents, such as *daroko* and *sosirigu.* The groom's presents had been accepted. Their visit opened the way for the bride's family to attend the party. A few weeks later, the groom's family paid the balance owed of the bride price.

2.1.2.4. Interpreting the Ritual

A social scientist is limited by her/his own experience of the conditions of those who are the main focus of the research. Briefly stated, the perspective of this research project is that scientific capability to understand social reality requires giving context to the observable phenomena. It depends on deep experience and thick description of the reality experienced by the people in a certain society (Geertz: 1993 [1973], 6-7). I came to Ngidiho with several assumptions that underlay my thinking. First, I started with the assumption that what I knew about the Galela people through my former work or my initial studies might be mistaken and require revision after I arrived on the field (see Chapter I). Secondly, neither the people in the target group nor I, could fully understand each other's background, to the point where our different methods and experiences would make complete sense to each other.[36] Thirdly, my understanding of them should not be limited to what they said or formulated verbally, but should also include how they used their words to structure their actions.

Carrying these assumptions to the fieldwork helped me to locate a particular cultural hermeneutic as an approach to map the people in Ngidiho. I elaborated a simple suggestion by Guy A. M. Widdershoven that the purpose of my fieldwork was to understand the life story of human beings (Widdershoven: 1993, 3-6). Widdershoven distinguishes between 'life' and 'story' when he explains the role of hermeneutic perspectives in revealing the life story of people. He builds his analysis on discussions from MacIntyre, Ricoeur and Merleau-Ponty. The word 'life' is bigger than just, say, 'action' or 'practice'. 'Action' or 'practice', involves free decisions guided by motivations that are rooted in a social network.[37] Thus understanding the life story of people is to create a personal context for myself within whatever broader climate of social attitudes may exist at the time (Kroger: 1993, 143). As you can see in the story of *the wedding party* in Ngidiho, it took time for me to understand what was happening among the people with whom I interacted. The larger picture that showed what was happening among them only had meaning for me later, after the whole drama of their new, ritual performance gradually showed how they coped with a unique crisis in their relationships. This crisis took shape long before *the wedding party.* A new form of the ritual was shaped to deal with an unprecedented situation.

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[36] I received much help by reading the experience of the MacCannells (MacCannell and MacCannell:1982, 73-74). They explain the experience of Jean-Paul Dumont who was accepted into the community of the Panare people, not as an American but as a Frenchman.

[37] cf. Hans-Georg Gadamer: "The free decision takes its bearings by the order of preference guiding one's life conduct, whether it be pleasure, or power and honour, or knowledge. Beside these, we encounter in the political make-up of human life together, other differences in life conduct, such as those between husband and wife, the elderly and the child, dependents and those who are independent, in former times chiefly the distinction between slave and free" (Gadamer: 1983, 91).

The wedding Party[38] is a narration that shows the dynamics of power in which the people created a unique ritual in a time of crisis. The narration is a case study. A narration reveals nuances that clothe ritual and show more clearly the essence of power. Through this short narration, we are shown the complexity of networks in the village of Ngidiho. We have a picture of a developing village in which a modern industrial system of banana agro business is interweaved with the traditional life style of the people. This narration stimulated me to know more about the real practices of the people and how they create ritual as a part of their knowledge and mental production. A narration explains how productive resources, affection and services are distributed among people in households, kinship networks, and neighbourhoods.

What does this narration tell us? First of all we can see the story as the description of conflict and its solution between two families that involved the whole kin-network of both sides in the village. Unbalanced power has to be overcome. Each person plays a part that fits with his/her position, to calm down the disturbing crisis. Conflict is articulated through words, gestures and expression. To shift to a new stage in their relationships, a new form of the ritual has to be established that functions like a sacred power to witness the new birth of the agreement in the community.

2.1.2.5. A Preliminary Definition

Before I arrive at a definition, we need to turn to some characteristic of ritual.

1. Ritual includes reciprocal actions that have two characteristics. Firstly, ritual is a powerful form of reciprocal negotiation by which several parties try to reach an agreement, which represents all their interests. The legitimacy of the ritual action sometimes involves a sacred meaning. For example, the ritual practice within the dance and the ritual action of the Muslim marriage ceremony both include sacred meanings although only one is explicitly religion. This shows that ritual action is part of ordinary life. Secondly, ritual involves reciprocal transactions of exchange. This characteristic is part of the process of making a new network among families. The line of the "outside-female" (daughter in law) is required to bring ritual goods on special occasions such as marriages and funerals. The line of the "outside male" (son in law) is required to bring different ritual goods. For those who have no relative ties, people apply common exchange, which is called *jojobo* (litt. It means work or labour).

2. Ritual is based on inequalities/differences that have two characteristics. Firstly, it relates to power relations that affect the negotiations. This characteristic can be seen in the bargaining between the groom's family and the bride's family on how much bride wealth and *fongu* (the cost for wedding party) the groom's

[38] I use this narration of *the Wedding Party* with a deep appreciation that the bride's family was remarkably flexible in their willingness to rearrange the marriage agreements. In the following chapter I will show how the principles of exchange in marriage negotiations are often described as unjust to women in Western ethnographies. I argue that sometime analysis using feminist theory to examine another tradition leads to oversimplification. See Adeney-Risakotta (2001d).

family should provide. In fact, both parties do bargaining on how much has to be paid by each side, but it is not always bargaining between equals. Secondly, it includes acts of mutual recognition that are determined by gender and social class. This is shown by gender distinctions in the exchange of ritual goods. The male line is required to bring sago, local liquor and fish. Whereas the female line has to carry raw rice, cooked rice, sugar and vegetables. The question emerges: why are there gender distinctions in the goods that are exchanged? The dance of *the wedding party* shows us an imaginative ritual in which each person of the family or society strengthens their roles in the community. The bride's family brings goods that are the normal everyday product of the bride's work. The groom's family brings the products of male labour. Therefore the exchange of goods reinforces the division of labour in society based on gender.

3. Ritual is not ancient and static, but constantly redefined along political and economic lines. The narration of *the wedding party* shows two characteristics. Firstly, the rituals are obviously reinterpreted and revised. Sometimes in the process of reinterpretation and revision, rituals are manipulated for the purpose of creating a conflict. On the other hand, rituals also function as an integrative solution to bring social cohesion. Interestingly, we have seen how the father of the groom tried to soften the tension by revising the content of the dance. By doing so, he gave new meaning to the play, which was seen by the whole audience at the party, as a way to bring reconciliation with the parents of his daughter in law. Secondly, changes in rituals are often freighted with economic, as well as social values. The mat, which the bride's mother gave to the father of her son in law, had the same value as the Rp. 100,000 the father of the groom put on her hair bun. If the mother appreciated the innovative action of reconciliation in the dance by only giving an inferior mat of lesser value she would lose the respect of the people at the party.

These characteristics help me construct a preliminary working definition of ritual with which to analyze other theories that relate to the definition of ritual. *Rituals are dynamic, reciprocal acts of negotiation and exchange, which unite and distinguish people by symbolic actions that express political, social, cultural and economic power differences. It functions to make and unmake community.*

2.1.3. Searching for A Perspective

The narration above shows how a marriage involves the whole families from both sides. These families have their own way to build an in-laws-network to extend their relationship through the marriage network of their children. Conflict that occurs during the process of marriage needs to be negotiated. They used their own symbolic practices in *the wedding party* and modified them in order to solve the problem. This intentional action made sense to bring back the two families. If they want to live together and agree to support their children's choice to marry, they have to negotiate their bargaining position. In a larger context, a country is like a family. Families, whether in a kinship network, or symbolically as a nation, create rituals to integrate their members. However, sometimes counter, or opposing rituals are created to challenge the authority of the families.

In her study of the Halmaheran people of Sahu, Visser (1989), argues that the ritual practices of the people should be differentiated from what people in West think of as 'ritual'. Visser shows that the Sahu people do not consider their agricultural rituals as separated or distinct from their material actions in their agricultural activities. She says:

> The Sahu themselves do not consider the agricultural rituals as distinguishable from the more practical farming activities involved in rice cultivation.." (Visser: 1989, 74).

In my description of *the wedding party* it is very difficult to distinguish between "ritual" and "non-ritual" actions without artificially creating two different narratives. In Ngidiho, there is no particular or general name used to cover all the activities that make up a wedding. In Ngidiho and Galela at large, kinship networks will know about the marriage plan when somebody comes to their house to invite them to contribute to the wedding feast. This invitation is called "*gogoro*". But there is no word to say directly "wedding party". However, they name every step of the marriage process (see Chapter III). Henk Schulte Nordholt says that in Bali what is labeled anthropologically as "ritual", actually is called "work" (see also Goody: 1997, 102; Firth: 1967).[39] In Javanese culture, the word *nduwé gawé* means work in preparation for a ritual performance, during which relatives, neighbors and friends come together to help the family who will be sponsoring the life cycle ritual. The Javanese use the term *rewang* to indicate those who participate in the preparation for the ritual. The word *rewang* means servant or friend (Keeler: 1987, 142-143).

Visser shows that the Sahu attach great significance to ritual performances even though detailed knowledge of the proper texts may have withered, and despite the fact that they have embraced Christianity (Visser: 1989, 74-75). Visser's research focuses on an exposition of particular stages in the life cycle. However she implicitly shows the dynamic adjustments that the people make in their own ritual processes. My research in Ngidiho confirms Visser's observations. Building from this work, I will clarify and define the practices which anthropologists label "ritual", not just as discrete symbolic actions, but as part of a larger political struggle which derives its meaning from a long historical process. To understand a ritual we must understand its history.

2.1.3.1. Redefining Ritual

None of the definitions of ritual in the anthropological literature seems to capture all the practices of ritual described in my narratives about rituals in Halmahera. The word ritual comes from Latin, *ritualis* that is linked to the word *ritus* (rite)

[39] I would like to thank Prof. Henk Schulte Nordholt for this reference. Prof. Schulte Nordholt was the chairman of the Amsterdam School Staff seminar on May 7, 2000 that discussed this chapter. The seminar helped to sharpen this chapter.

that means "practice" especially in religion.[40] Maureen Henry analyses the use of ritual kinship by the Roman Empire as a political ideology to unite various practices from other ethnic groups who were subjugated by the Romans (Henry: 1979 [1947]). In 312 CE a new empire, Byzantium arose, ruled by Constantine. He established Christian rituals as a political tool to oppose the Roman Empire.[41] Ritual politics were also adopted by the Holy Roman Emperor to homogenize practices of all the nations that were subjugated under him.

The Reformation movement stressed the inspiration of the Bible and the validity of its interpretation by the individual conscience. This provided a moral grounds for the separation of church and state and a theological rationale for opposing the imperialist politics of the Holy Roman Emperor in the name of religion. [42] The Reformation stimulated the birth of the "nation," defined as groups which are bigger than families but smaller than clans and which have a strong unified identity (Wilkinson: 1971, 88). However early nationalism still maintained the practices of feudalism and the politics of empire. The nationalist movement soon extended the idea of nation beyond ethno-religious categories. After the American and French revolutions, nationalism promoted universal principles of citizenship, solidarity and equal rights (Wilkinson: 1971, 89-90). In this process new rituals were created by the French Revolution to subjugate the authority of the feudal-clerical system that used religious language to legitimise their power (Hunt: 1984, 21).

Since the French Revolution, processes of rationalisation, secularisation and bureaucratisation have diminished the power of religion, especially Christianity, as a single comprehensive system of meaning (Weber: 1974).[43] Western discourse is very cautious about political rituals that use religious symbols because of their similarity to medieval politics where imperial power was clothed

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[40] cf Onions: 1964, 768-769. Ritual is the adjective form of the word 'rite' (Partridge: 1990 [1958], 566-567).

[41] One example of the creation of a new ritual was the Jerusalem pilgrimage. This ritual was created more for political purposes than for religious ones. The conversion of Jerusalem from a Roman into a Christian city was important for Constantine who was converted later, after his mother Helena. To do that, he created the pilgrimage to Jesus' burial place, which had never been practiced by the earlier Christian themselves. The Emperor issued sacred edicts and began to build a route for the pilgrimage between Jerusalem and Constantinople (Peters: 1985, 131-150).

[42] According to Geoffrey Benjamin, the sixteen-century Reformation movement in Germany was the source of inspiration for the creation of modern-nation states in Europe (Benjamin:1988, 9). The Reformation was not only a religious movement but was also a struggle for local power that opposed the homogeneous politics that tried to enforce a united Christendom through Christian rituals and the common language of the Catholic Church (Fisher-Galati:1959, 190-196; Stadwald:1996).

[43] There was a movement of anti-ritualism in the Western scientific tradition due to the criticism of using ritual to gain power (Patton and Doniger: 1996, 63-64). Many Western critics view ritual or rites as formalized repetitive acts whose symbolic meaning is either lost or irrelevant. In this context, Talal Asad rightly concludes that the word ritual lost its original meaning as it appeared in monasteries of the ninth century, meaning practice or discipline (Asad: 1993, 62). In the 18th century, according to Asad, ritual was understood as a book, which directs people in religious worship. The idea of the book relates to the holy book, which provides instructions on how different people must behave. A text or a script becomes a source of rules for guiding the way people behave (Asad: 1993, 58).

with religious ritual to justify territorial expansion and religious exclusivism. However Robert N. Bellah, David Kertzer and others have shown that in advanced democratic states such as the United States, political rhetoric is often clothed with ritual (Bellah: 1975; Ketzer: 1988). Civil religion,[44] complete with its own rituals, is created by civil society to integrate members of society, without homogenizing them under a unified state ideology. Within this context, the state guarantees all citizens the right to follow their own practices under a social contract in which all agree to obey a common law. Not only democracies, but also Communist governments used rituals to strengthen social order in society (Lane: 1981).[45] The use of ritual in Indonesian politics is also well attested (N. Schulte Nordholt: 1980; H. Schulte Nordholt: 1981,1991; Sekimoto: 1990).

Talal Asad explains the historical contexts at the time when ritual was formulated. He begins showing the general definition of ritual as a book that directs the way rites should be performed and moving to the modern conception of ritual as enacted symbols of particular behavior. Asad suggests that definitions of ritual that are embedded in many anthropological formulations, such as the influential writings of Clifford Geertz,[46] are the result of a conception of ritual inspired by the practice of Christianity. He questions whether such a formulation can be used to understand different phenomena outside the church (Asad: 1993, 61). How can a definition of ritual grounded in Western Christianity explain non-Christian traditions, which have different books or only have oral traditions? Asad questions definitions of ritual as a religious symbol system and rightly observes that they are influenced by a secularized Western anthropological tradition that assumes the demystification of religious practices in the post-Christian West. [47]

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[44] Bellah is credited with reviving Rousseau's idea of a civil religion, however he has himself abandoned the term since it gave rise to so much misunderstanding (Bellah, et. al., 1985, 1991).

[45] cf. Henry:1979 [1947]. In this book Henry shows that conceptions of Christian ritual as portrayed by John Winthrop in his sermons to early Puritan settlers in 1630, in America, influenced the C.P.S.U constitution in which the claim of blessing is strongly applied to the communist society (cf. Henry: 1979, ix-xi).

[46] Many scholars use Geertzian definitions of ritual and religion. Ketzer questions the assumption that ritual only remains politically significant in "less advanced" societies, however his definition of ritual is limited to the definition provided by Clifford Geertz (Ketzer: 1988,2-3). Schulte Nordholt says that Kertzer's definition does not include material aspects of cultural production (H. Schulte-Nordholt: 1991,5).

[47] I agree with Asad that the Western tradition is trapped in a conceptual dichotomy between the sacred and profane that arose in Enlightment discourse. However, I think Asad does not account for the new ritual practices that are always reappearing in Western politics. Western democratic and liberal ideology uses many 'non-religious' rituals to strengthen its hold on the hearts of the people. Religious practices cannot easily be used as a political identity for citizens due to the irreducible multicultural and multireligious nature of most modern societies. Sometimes particular groups claim divine authority for their own purposes, but most modern states do not validate their claims. This does not mean that the role of religion is weak. Many human beings find inspiration through the divine spirit whose presence is experienced through religious practices. In many modern states, the relation between human beings and God is considered a private, not a political relationship. However, even if Church and State are separated, the influence of religion on politics remains very strong. Religious practices are still strong in most societies but with different rituals according to the community of believers. There is no single Christian practice in worldwide Christianity comparable to the rituals of Islam. However Western politics has long been influenced by Christian culture. The Evangelical and Charismatic movements in Christianity

Keeping the observation of Asad in my mind, I should move now to discuss several definitions of ritual formulated by anthropologists. *First* is the formulation provided by Geertz. In his explanation about the discordant relation between religion and human secular experiences, Geertz discusses the role of ritual. He says that

> In a ritual, the world as lived and the world as imagined, fused under the agency of a single set of symbolic forms, turn out to be the same world, producing thus that idiosyncratic transformation in one's sense of reality to which Santayana refers in my epigraph (Geertz: 1993 [1973], 112).

In this definition, Geertz sees a ritual as a condition where the reality of everyday life and the ideal reality of people are melted into a unique reality. In many pages of his explanation of religion, rituals are only described as significant symbols for interpreting meaning (Geertz: 1998, 48, 82, 112, 127-143). A melded reality is an emotional reality where people may even enter into a trance (Geertz: 1993, 117). Geertz interprets ritual as a way of producing *feelings*, not as a dynamic *relationship* between human beings (Geertz: 1993, 82). Geertz says,

> But the point is that in man neither regnant fields nor mental sets can be formed with sufficient precision in the absence of guidance from symbolic models of emotion. In order to make up our minds we must know how we feel about things and to know how we feel about things we need the public images of sentiment that only ritual, myth, and art can provide (Geertz: 1993, 82).

Geertz's analysis can be understood in relation to the demystification of sacred meanings in ritual in the Western Christian tradition as discussed above. Geertz views ritual as a tool of sentiment and meaning rather than as a means of political and economic negotiation. Geertz and others forget that even in the West, ritual appears in many different guises.[48] The view of ritual as mainly symbol becomes problematic when a study of ritual is located in the discourse about social movements, class analysis and political history. If a ritual or religion is only a psychological phenomena or a symbolic fact how can one explain the development of social movements based only on symbolic meanings without elaborating on how rituals are used by a community (Asad: 1983, 252; van der Veer: 1989, 46) and how the use of rituals relate to material conditions and

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effectively project their unique religious rituals using modern media technology (Aldridge:2000,130).

[48] See (van der Veer:1989,46). Sean Wilentz acknowledges that there has been a shift in the perspective of historians. They now interpret authority, power and social perception as fundamental elements in the use of rituals within political movements, rather than seeing rituals as just irrational elements in an otherwise rational system (Wilentz: 1985, 13-16); cf. Kelly and Kaplan:1990,120. However there is still no definition what is ritual.

interests (Hefner: 1985,46; Russell and Cunningham: 1989, 2; Schulte Nordholt: 1991, 5)? Scholars who examine traditions outside the Western world have criticized Geertz's definition of ritual and religion as a cultural system.[49]

The problem of Geertz's theory of religion is not in the formulation of religion as a cultural system, which functions both as "a model for," and "a model of" a human being's mentality. It is true that culture and religion are models for and models of, people's mentality in the society that produces them (Geertz: 1993, 118). However, the definition formulated by Geertz limits his consideration of the cultural and social forces that produce a society. Peter van der Veer says that the intention of Geertz is to look for the meaning of a symbol within itself (van der Veer: 1989, 45, 47, 51).

Geertz's definition influences his misinterpretation of a dispute over the funeral of a young Javanese man. Geertz relates the case study of a young Javanese man who died and whose funeral became a symbol of identity. Geertz reduces the practical meaning of ritual in Javanese Muslim society by formulating the usage of religious ritual as a sign of conservatism in opposition to modernity (Geerzt: 1993, 150). Geertz suggests that a general social phenomenon such as social differentiation because of modernity is a source of conflict in society. Geertz doesn't explain explicitly the linkage between the capability of adjustment within the ritualizing process and power (van der Veer: 1989, 47). Using the perspective given by van der Veer above, I would like to see Geertz develop his analysis on the change in a ritual *slametan* (thanksgiving ritual) in the context of the funeral, from a religious meaning to a political means. Why does ritual become more important than just as a means for social interaction? (Geertz: 1993, 168). When the Modin, who is the Muslim ritual leader does not quickly bury the young leader of the Javanese Muslim *abangan* (peasant), it not only becomes a source of conflict regarding Islamic practice, but it also relates to political distinctions in the society especially if we consider the political turmoil in the Indonesian politics of the fifties. [50]

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[49] See for example, Asad's research in the Middle East (1993), Veer's research in India (van der Veer: 1989, 1994) and H. Schulte Nordholt's research in Bali, Indonesia (Schulte Nordholt: 1991; 1993).

[50] Geertz's work shows the significant role of social forces in the shaping of Javanese ritual. His explanation is important for understanding the function of power in the process of making rituals in a religious community. As far as I can see there are three elements in Javanese society that relate to power as Geertz demonstrates in his book (Geertz: 1976). The three social categories are peasants, traders, and administrators. Geertz tries to show that these three classes represent three Islamic ritual orientations. The peasants relate to what were called *abangan*, the traders are labelled *santri*, and the administrators are recognized as *priyaji*. The *abangan* are those who practice Islam along with local Javanese rituals. *Santri* practice Islam as written in the Qur'an. *Priyayi* practice Islam in a way similar to the *abangan*'s but with a greater emphasis on esoteric mysticism. Andree Feillard suggests that the categories formulised by Geertz have changed. According to her explanation, 79.1% of Indonesian Muslims are now santri and 20.9% are not. However, she divides the *santri* into two categories, firstly, those who practice strict Islamic rituals and those who still practice the *abangan* rituals. She concludes that the shift in the category of *abangan* to santri is related to changes in Indonesian politics in which the political participation of Islam became larger than during the period under the regime of Suharto. Moreover, she says if a traditional santri gets sick, she/he will go to a *kiai* (a Muslim leader) to ask for water from Mecca

The second definition suggests that rituals are ways of overcoming distinctions. In his research in the 1950's, Geertz showed how funeral rituals distinguished political identity for the Javanese community. In Javanese community where Andrew Beatty did his research during the 1990's, it appears that the ritual *slamatan* functions to unite the three types of Muslim orientation in Javanese society. Thus ritual may prevent social disintegration such as occurred during the 1965-1966 massacre of alledged Communists led by the Indonesian armies involving Islamic Organisations in East Java (Beatty: 1999, 25-49). According to Beatty, in the *slametan* ritual, those who hold different religious orientations must negotiate their power for interpreting Islamic cosmology within the context of the Javanese ethic of social harmony (*rukun*) (Beatty: 1999, 38-40, 49-50). In the context of a pluralistic society, multivocal rituals have great integrative power (Beatty: 1999, 49). The same conclusion can be found in the study of Victor Turner who sees ritual as a social mechanism that functions to restore the equilibrium and solidarity of the group (Turner: 1967).

Mark R. Woodward (1989) and Robert Hefner (1985) object to Islamic stereotypes such as *abangan, santri*, and *priyayi* as formulised by Geertz and used by Beatty, especially if the stereotypes are used to measure the depth of the Javanese's Muslim faith. Woodward shows that Geertz failed to account for the transformation of Islamic rituals from the Arab Islamic tradition into the Javanese Islamic tradition. The people in Ngidiho, Galela distinguish their religious practices from other villages in Galela because they claim the right practices were brought first by the Muslim *'ulamâs*, whereas the practices that came later were considered *makrúh*.[51] The interesting part of the analysis of ritual in the North Moluccas is to see how they adjust ideologies that come through religion, trade and development into unique practices of the people in Ngidiho. Despite the complexity and uniqueness of their rituals, the Galelans see themselves as true Muslims.[52]

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whereas if an *abangan* gets sick, she/he will go to a *dukun* (shaman) or seek medical care (Feillard:2001, 3).

[51] '*Makrúh* is a principle of Islamic law. This Arabic word means an obligation that has to be fulfilled. Following the law leads to '*pahala*' (reward), but if it is not followed, it is not sinful.

[52] In addition to the debate on the ritual distinctions of Islamic communities in Javanese society produced by Geertz and discussed by Woodward and Hefner it would be interesting to see a comparative analysis of the distinction of Islamic practices between Shi' ism and Sunnis that relate to the formation of identity, class and power in each community. Shireen T. Hunter analyses various Islamic practices that relate to ethnicities and political power in each community (Hunter: 1998, 38-39; Lambton: 1985 [1981] cf. (Choueiri: 1989, 45). According to her explanation, Sunnis relate to the practices of northern Arab tribes who accepted a form of elective process to solve the succession issues. Whereas in Shi' ism, which was based on lineage, a dynastic system advocated a hereditary system of successor-ship. Obviously, these two different Islamic practices are not normative institutions but they had a historical landscape that shaped their differences. The rise of Islam in 622 AD (A.H.1) was during the period of the two large world Empires of Byzantium and Persia. Islam follows the Islamic calendar that sets the exodus (*hijra*) of Prophet Mohammad from Mecca to Medina in 622 as the starting point of Islamic history (Crone and Cook: 1977,9). Persia was influenced by Zoroastrianism practices, whereas Byzantium was identified with Christianity (Lewis: 1995). By identifying with the new religious movement of Islam, Persia was enabled to overcome its rival, because it extended its territories. However, the superiority of Persia could not be asserted by accepting only the ritual practices introduced by the

The *third definition* relates to Talal Asad who sees ritual as a part of organised practices of power. According to Asad, ritual is a medium where power is exercised (Asad: 1993).[53] Catherine Bell describes Asad's analysis of ritual as moving from "reading symbols" to "analyzing practices" (Bell: 1999, 79).[54] Van der Veer discusses ritual in the discourse of social movements especially considering how power and its change of constellation is enforced within ritual (van der Veer: 1989, 47). However, it is very important to notice that a ritual functions not only for mobilizing the power of people to differentiate between each other but also plays a role in the negotiation of power for the purpose of integration. My data shows that ritual is used for both purposes, to distinguish and to unite people.

The fourth definition is ritual as a means for social change. Ritual is a powerful tool for mediating ideologies, both to unite or divide the people from one another (Wolf: 1993, 57). In this general polemic about ritual theorists often ignore the question of where does the power come from. We need an explanation of how power can be masked by ritual so that it is seen as perfectly natural (Mouffe: 1979).[55] Eric R. Wolf asserts that power is the product of a relationship (Wolf: 1993: 4-5). Norbert Elias says that power is like a game in which each party searches for their turn to become the winner (Quoted in Wolf: 1993, 4). People create different kinds of ideas to dominate others and appear as the winner. In the broad political arena, ideology becomes the instrument to preserve power and interests that are based on material conditions. In the body politic, material conditions influence the articulation of new meanings that are formulated as part of a larger ideology (MacCannel and MacCannel: 1982).[56] Ideology has to be

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Arabs. Persia wanted to have her own style of practices that were localised. This schism is known in Islam as *fitnah* (see Lambton: 1985). However according to Choueiri the schism was not connected with theological differences but related to the ethnic distinctions and ritual practices (Choueiri: 1989). A similar dynamic may be used to explain the different practices of rituals between Christian traditions in Western countries.

[53] Asad shows how in histories of Western criminal law, judicial torture was linked to the power of Christian ritual which was rooted in primitive forms of accusatorial procedure (Asad:1993, 84 ff).

[54] The main question of practice theories in regard to ritual is how to explain it as a means by which a construed relationship of authority and submission is revealed. As a practice, ritual has to be examined in the context of power and unequal relationships. With this focus of study, an analysis of ritual is situated in its historical process in which a ritual pattern is not only reproduced, but also reinterpreted and transformed (Bell:1999, 83). According to practice theory, power is clothed with ritual for a justification. Influenced by the change of political trajectories after colonialism when colonial domination and its universalizing discourse were questioned by what people practiced in their everyday lives, the theory of practice comes up with a new analysis on how rituals should be studied (Bell:1999, 76-83). Bell mentions several names of people who discuss how to understanding ritual as everyday practice, including: Pierre Bourdieu, Marshall Sahlins and Talal Asad (Bell:1999, 76-83).

[55] This question is inspired from the discussion of power as it is explained in the political thought of Antonio Gramsci (Mouffe:1979).

[56] The word ideology can be given a positive sense as discussed by Wolf (Wolf:1993, 23-35). "Ideology" appeared as a critical word during the Enlightenment, meaning "the science of ideas". Ideas were understood as sensations and knowledge. This positive meaning created by Antoine Destutt de Tracy from France was opposed by counter-enlightenment Germans such as Karl Marx and Engels who see the notion of ideology as a negative conception referring to dominant ruling truth.

communicated in ways that make sense to its followers. Ideological representation can be seen in various hegemonic realities, in formal-conscious beliefs and in world views (William: 1981, 26).

The fifth definition shows ritual as a tool for mobilization. In a study of collective action and social movements, Charles Tilly discusses Max Weber's conception of the role of charismatic leaders who use ritual to solve the problem of succession. Weber apparently shows that charismatic leaders develop their power by using ritual as an irrational tool (Tilly: 1978, 38). In contrast, my research suggests that ritual is rarely just an irrational tool. Sometimes continuity of ritual allows a new ideology or religion to replace the old one. Leaders invest new meanings in old rituals in order to maintain legitimacy in the eyes of the people. Ritual exchanges are also a common means of minimizing the use of unilateral power. Exchange rituals negotiate power. The stagnation of a power structure can stimulate a counter attack, which is ritually legitimated. Rituals require a symbolic enactment that can mobilise the people who favour the interests behind the ritual. Rituals can manipulate people by masking the powerful material conflicts that motivate the ritual (Jarman: 1997). Ritual clothes power with sacred meaning. Religious and ethnic justifications of identity can be seen as rational. The elite is often clothed with ritual in order to manipulate popular values and strengthen a hierarchical structure that favors the dominant group over the common people. At the same time, power that is colored by ritual can be used as a means for resistant action from the weakest to challenge the ritual practices of the dominant group (Dirks: 1994, 483-503). Ritual as a means of resistance is often used by the weak to balance and equalize the power of the strong.

Historical accounts show that rituals mobilize people, especially in the process of the succession of institutional power. The history of rituals in the Moluccas, from the colonial period up to the 1999-2000 violence suggests that a ritual is like a coin with two faces. These two faces relate to the possibility of demystification and loss of sacredness in one set of rituals at the same time as other rituals are imbued with new sacredness (Taussig: 1980, 230-231). The politics of memory and recognition are structured within the command line of their social networks to create a political identity. The identity that comes through politics sometimes occurs in a violent act when a powerful agent imposes a particular identity on an individual or group (Laclau and Zac: 1994,23).

The sixth definition relates to Bell's definition of a ritual as a practice that is constructed socially to regulate people's behavior. Bell labels this process as "redemptive hegemony". She says ritual is

> a construal of reality as ordered in such a way as to allow the actor some advantageous ways of acting (Bell: 1999, 81).

There are complex realities of power enshrined in entities such as gods, traditions, myths and values that are non-human. Within these entities rituals are shaped by and for the purpose of a social relationship (Bell:1999, 82). Bell's emphasis on

rituals as acts that should be separated from other actions raises some interesting problems. She says that if we consider ritual,

> …as practice, the most we can say is that it involves ritualization, that is, a way of acting that distinguishes itself from other ways of acting in the very way it does what it does; moreover, it makes this distinction for a specific purpose (Bell: 1999, 81).

This statement of Bell is hard to apply as a general phenomenon to all cases. My assumption is that thought is manifested in action that invokes a socially constructed reality. This reality determines the form of people's practices (Berger and Luckmann: 1967). Social values, cultural sentiments and power struggles play an important role to shape the way people perceive and approach their lives. To express a ritual act one does not have to isolate ritual practice from non-ritual if the boundaries between the sacred and profane are unclear in her/his system of knowledge.[57] My research shows that ritual is a dynamic medium of communication, which can be adjusted for different kinds of purposes. Ritual unites people in spite of their differences. My objection is that the understanding of a ritual cannot be separated from the former process that produces a ritual performance. The action of ritual is not independent or separated from other factors whether material or spiritual. Within the body politic, ritual action cannot be divided from non-ritual action. But old rituals can be reshaped by material interests to become new rituals within the same structure of body politics.

The seventh definition shows that ritual relates to a notion of power relations. It inspires one to distinguish their identity from the identity of others and their former identities. Ritual mediates a process of separation from one's previous status (van Gennep: 1960).[58] Arnold van Gennep concludes that in the phase of transition, the ritual subjects are in a "liminal period" which shows the ambiguity of the person's status. Mary Douglas says that in the transition period of a ritual the situation appears very dangerous and can lead to an act of violence (Douglas: 1988 [1966]). It is primarily performative. Ritual changes social relationships. It establishes new identities and new sacredness. The process of constructing identity can be achieved through the categories of spirituality and rationality. Rationality provides a space in which sacred meaning in a ritual is demystified and demythologised in relation to the politics of the subjectivity of human beings (Carrette: 2000, 136-137) and the creation of a new ritual. However, at the same time, rationality itself becomes a means for creating inequality and domination. Edward W. Said demonstrates that the British Empire justified their domination over Egypt by claiming its intellectual superiority over the local people (Said: 1978, 32).

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[57]The distinction between sacred and profane practice is not the best starting point for understanding ritual. Analysing a ritual performance should be conducted, as a narration in which the understanding of the meaning the people make is located in the whole system of their cultural production.

[58] Van Gennep discusses the meaning of ritual as a rite of passage associated with periodic events or crisis in people life such as initiation, marriage, illness or death (van Gennep:1960).

My data suggests that the demystification of ritual in the old Moluccan structures during the colonial period was part of a systematic effort to delegitimize and replace the powerful, traditional leadership in the society. Spirituality can also be used to bolster and establish the power that determines social orders and structures. Sacred meaning is used to lift the spirits of human beings so that they dare challenge the institutional powers of society (Carrette: 2000, 137). Of course it can also stimulate the creation of injustice.

A new question appears. Is it possible to demystify ritual so as to reveal the dynamics of hidden power, without stripping its sacred meaning? Many movements in society derive their inspiration from awareness of inequality, insecure conditions or just power struggles that are legitimized through religious teachings and cultural, moral or formal beliefs?[59] Asad questions the indicators used to determine how other traditions outside Christianity define ritual (Asad: 1993, 61). What are the implications of his argument for examining other traditions that are not part of a great tradition? To what extent are the global religions different from other traditions such as local ones? First of all, Asad shows the reality of different traditions, which influence the practice of ritual, but he doesn't answer the question of how to understand other traditions, which are not included in world-wide traditions such as Christianity and Islam.

The historical context that invokes the distinction between whether an action has a sacred meaning or not is determined by the notion of power. In his study on pilgrimage to Ayodhya, van der Veer concludes that the sacred meaning of the place changed after the state used the idea of the *Agamas* (religions) as a tool for penetration into temple affairs (van der Veer: 1989, 51). According to van der Veer, the earlier sacred meaning of the Ayodhya practices relates to the ritualistic pilgrimage of purity and the ancestor rituals (van der Veer: 1989, 51,59-60). In this case, sacred meaning is used because of the power struggle between the Muslim and Hindu communities over control of the place. It is interesting to see the transformation of belief conceptions among Hindus who were influenced by Muslim discourse about legitimacy. The earlier thought of the Hindus about the place was already linked with the idea of sacred meaning, but they needed the same legitimacy as the Muslims in order to claim their land. The shift to assert a higher sacred meaning is demonstrated by ritual actions. These rituals already existed in their ordinary practice, but the conceptualisation of the rituals was reformulated in the same symbolic categories as used by the Muslims. The more people have to legitimise their actions, the more sacred meaning is created.[60]

[59] cf (Wilkinson:1971, 55-79) and (van der Veer: 1994).

[60] A similar case can be observed in Robert Hefner's research on the Tengger mountain people in Eastern Java, Indonesia. He says that the ritual forms of Tengger tradition (*adat*) had to be perfected by introducing true religion *(agama)* into its rituals (Hefner:1985, 259-260). Religious reform in the community was related to developmental projects that focused on education. However, the local people hesitated to adjust their rites in conformity with new reforms. Instead of showing the influence of religious reforms as a means of state intervention, as discussed by van der Veer, Hefner focuses on the advantage an individual would receive by converting to a world religion. This brings him to the same conclusion made by van der Veer, that the cause of conversion is not mainly faith. Conversion is socialized in political worlds where an individual's

Prior to the arrival of the universal religions in North Moluccas the society's belief in divinity focused on respect for the ancestors. It can still be categorized as holding sacred meanings. The "special logic'' of the knowledge system for this group requires that they honour their people who died before them. For them, this is rational action with a sacred meaning.[61]

The eighth definition relates with the assumption that ritual can be formulated according to the capabilities of people to respond dynamically to environmental changes. There is a dialogue between the change of material conditions and the re-conceptualisation of their symbol systems. Changes in labour relations within family and kinship groups, or in the larger society, pressure the people to create ritual acts to cope with the changes they face. As an example, the practice of the *Cakalele* dance by the people of Galela portrays several different layers of the historical landscape including the changing material contexts. The *Cakalele* dance shows the continuity of ritual over hundreds of years. The people adapt their memories with different motivations according to a changing historical context. The *Cakalele* dance shows traces of different meaningful practices since the period of colonisation down to the 1999-2000 violence in the North Moluccas. Each practice provided a different historical discourse for the people.

Ritual is not always formed with the explicit content of a religious meaning. Ritual exchange that we see in the narration, *the wedding party* was not created for religious purposes, but it has a sacred power that unites the two families. A failure to fulfil the exchange obligations that formalize the connection of the two kin-networks will directly affect their social, political and economic relationships. The people in Ngidiho extend their non-genealogical networks by mutual support or "work" (*jojobo*). These practices are the unwritten law that the people follow. Ritual practices are *adat* and an action that violates tradition is seen as betrayal.[62]

The introduction of new ideology into the people's practices can only be accepted if the old practices still have meaning for them. One of the tactics that both Muslim and Christian missionaries used to convert the people in Halmahera was to claim that their ancestors would be saved if they converted to the religion of the missionary. This suggests an intriguing answer to why in Ngidiho a single family often includes both Christians and Muslims. By converting to both the major religions, a family ensured the salvation, not only of themselves, but also guaranteed their ancestors' salvation, no matter which religion was right. A more recent movement of conversions began in the 1950s just before the first

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consciousness is formed (Hefner:1985, 263). His analysis has to be located in the political history of Indonesia after the massacre at the time of the communist dissolution in 1965-1966 when the state made atheism illegal (Hefner:1985,7). Local religious practices had to be modified by identification with one of the recognized religions in Indonesia such as Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, or Buddhism. In this context, most of the Tengger communities converted to Hinduism. Moreover, Indonesian Hindus created a monotheistic concept of God to allow them to live together with other universal religions such as Islam and Christianity (Sastra:1994).

[61] I agree with the analysis of John Plamenatz who says that the distinction between the sacred from the profane started in mediaeval philosophies. In contrast, Greek philosophies did not distinguish the divine form the human (Plamenatz: 1977, 8).

[62] cf. Koesnoe:1973, 6-8.

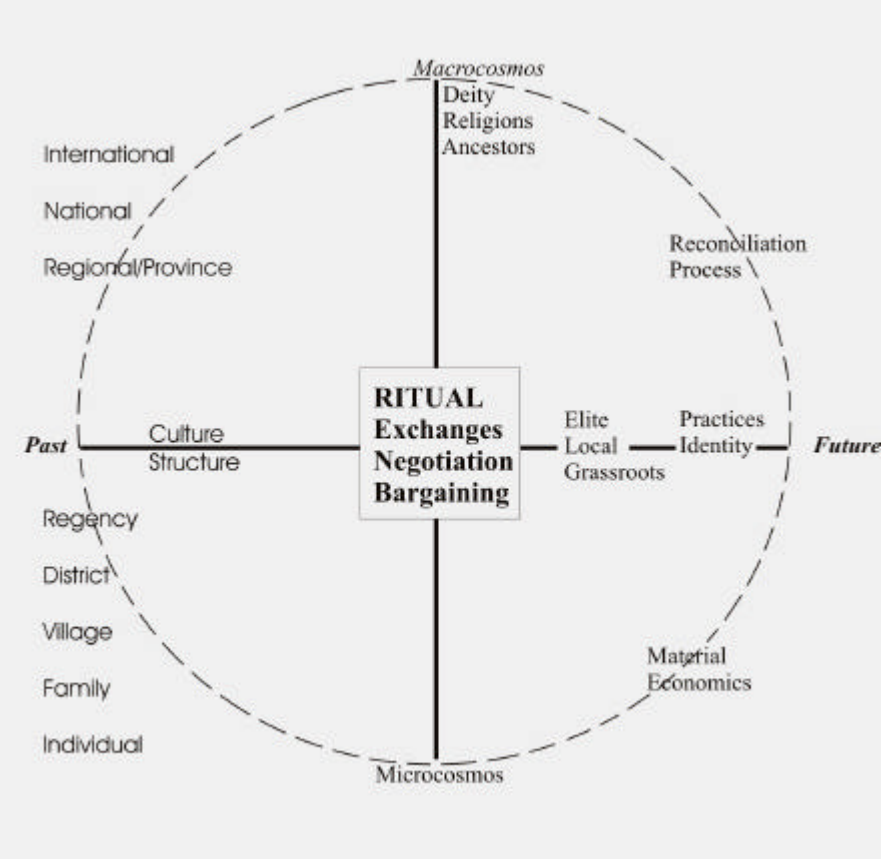
Indonesian election. Once again the legitimacy of the ancestor's position was maintained in ritual by linking the whole ancestry network to the salvation offered by the monotheistic religions. This is why after the 1999-2000 violence, ancestral rituals were used again by Muslims and Christians to tie together the relationships between families and their larger networks. The people combined and modified ancestral and religious rituals as part of a politics of remembering and forgetting in the process of reconciliation. Those who combined both ancestral and religious rituals to maintain their village unity did not participate in the violence.

Considering these eight definitions of ritual along with the narration of a Galelan wedding party and the working definition, I would like to propose a new definition that will guide my research in this dissertation. Ritual mediates transitions, not only in the human lifecycle but also in the crisis transitions of a particular society. As a dynamic practice, ritual is guided by ideology, memories and practices from the past that are reshaped as needed to meet the needs of the present. *These practices are usually highly symbolic to give weight and strength to the present action. This action often includes an element of negotiation related to power, wealth and identity. Sometimes the process of negotiation is strengthened by reference to sacred values that are acknowledged by all the parties involved. The ritual performance of sacred values can be seen in words, actions, gestures, myths, symbols etc. When the negotiation does not work out, ritual can be used to differentiate people and sharpen conflict.*

In summary, three aspects of Galelan ritual may be emphasized. First, ritual clarifies the meaning of power in the ordinary practices of the people. For example, the people sometimes voluntarily adopt their ruler's religion or rituals but incorporate their own meanings without submitting to domination. Secondly, rituals are the primary means to provide legitimacy for power. Rulers who do not follow the people's religion and/or ritual system are not legitimate in the eyes of the people. The same applies to the people. In the eyes of the ruler, the people are illegitimate if they do not follow the "true" religion and perform the proper rituals. The requirement of conformity in the practice of ritual can create a frontal conflict between people and their ruler. A unifying ideology that is inserted into a ritual action can only work well when this action is followed with exchanges that benefit both parties. Sometimes, of course, the nature of the exchange does not meet one party's expectations. Outside forces may determine whether or not a particular 'ritual' will become integrative or differential. Thirdly, if all parties are represented in the practice of rituals then they build solidarity across religious and ethnic lines. Shared rituals bind people together whether within the same religion or not. On the other hand, when ritual is used for political purposes to strengthen the dominance of an exclusive ideology, it creates sharp divisions that can lead to violence.

The figure below shows how ritual mediates transitions, not only in the human lifecycle but also in crisis transitions of a particular society. Ritual links the past with the present life of the people. Ritual practices give meaning to solidarity, starting at the family level and moving up to associations, neighbourhoods, villages, districts, provinces and countries. Ritual practices consolidate and restore a sense of belonging to a community, but if this community falls apart through conflict, the same practices can be used to create solidarity between opposing factions, just as they were used to create antagonism between the different parties. Ritual can rally the people against real or perceived outsiders and also can help them achieve agreement after confrontation. When used in conflict, ritual is a means to mobilize people to oppose existing power structures which are seen as a threat or to fight other groups seen as pursuing opposite interests. It formulates ideology and material conditions into concrete actions and uses sacred meanings to legitimize the decisions they reach together. These practices are usually highly symbolic and embody sacred values to give weight and strength to the present actions. These values are expressed through words, actions, gestures, myths, symbols etc..

Chart 1: Theory of Ritual



2.1.3.2. The Use of Ritual in Indonesian Politics

The use of the concept of ritual in the creation of conflict at the village level can help explain how conflict develops at the state level. The period of succession, after the fall of Suharto, is a critical time when many political agencies create competitive discourses that sometimes lead to violence. The danger is heightened when there is a great gap between different interests and the process of political negotiation is blocked. Patrons of political identities strive for hegemony and try to enforce a single identity from the centre to the periphery. As a result of power struggles between the centre and the periphery, there is a shift in the ritual actors who provide safety and security to the people. These dynamics influence the manifestation of violence in the process of political transition.[63]

In a society where mediating social institutions are weak there is a greater need to formulate policies and political rhetoric that utilize ritual. In this context, political action can be manipulated into becoming a kind of sacred ritual by which people are ready to die for their sake of their ideology. Terence Ball emphasizes how metaphorical discourse stabilizes political identities. In ritual participants recognise their identity and becomes committed to it (Ball: 1988, 86). Political identities are articulated in a language whose meaning can be seen at practical level. People distinguish each other through their social constructions in which a sacred meaning goes hand in hand with more mundane categories (Anderson: 1999 [1983], 12-18). For example, military force and economic power are also tools of subjugation that work together with new sacred myths created by a new political actor (Bauman: 1978, 202-203). New coalitions, formed on the basis of power and interests, create new "primordial" identities as a means to gain political position.

In the North Moluccas after the collapse of Suharto, elite competition and ethno-religious leadership became involved in the making and unmaking of their society. Power that treats ritual as a game reveals the world of the people who are involved. To understand the structure of society, we should analyse ritual according to the categories of the actors who each play a role (Wolf: 1993, 66-67). Conflict in the relations between families and kin-networks are often solved through ritual. However when riots involve both local and non-local groups, it becomes more difficult. The accumulation of fears and tension boils over into violence. I define violence as a deliberate action, which can be distinguished into physical violence, psychological violence and threats of violence. Competition for resources can lead to violence. People create meanings to justify their violence. Opposing groups use threats of physical violence to defend themselves and express their power, thus increasing fear and tension. The negative turning point for the violence in the Halmahera was the moment when a land-dispute between the people of Kao and the Makians was changed from a local, material-ethnic conflict into a transcendent religious war that invited outside intervention.

[63] cf. Robinson:1995.

In the context of the North Moluccas, the collapse of the Suharto regime improved the position of some local competitors over their rivals in the struggle for leadership positions and control of natural resources. The people reconstruct the story of their past to legitimate their current interests. The Makians, who now occupied the centre of governmental power in Ternate, built a coalition with the Sultan of Tidore in their ancient rivalry with the Sultan of Ternate. Meanwhile the Sultan of Ternate embraced the middle classes from other ethnic groups in the island of Halmahera. Using a politics of ritual that appealed to ancient loyalties, the Sultan of Ternate built a coalition with the Halmaheran elite to enhance his reputation and overcome a dispute between the Kao people and the Makians.

According to the old boundaries, a person was primarily tied to traditions within the limited territory of their village, with loser ties to a regional and national identity. Religious rituals, including the Hajj, reinforced a transcendent, non-territorial, non-ethnic identity. Religious ideology became more significant than ethnicity and was used to promote the cause of material interests connected with power struggles at regional, national and international levels. The weakest in the society immediately experienced the effects. The divided elites sought support by dividing society as well.

The story of how the Ngidiho people in Galela became involved includes the narration of how they lost their land during the globalisation process under Suharto's regime. Beginning in 1990 they were forced by the government to sell their land at a price even lower than the very low price paid by the multinational corporation that set up the banana agro business in 1991. Chinese investors from Jakarta brought the global agro industry to Galela, attracted by ethnographic accounts of Galelan 'banana culture' written by a team of Japanese anthropologists. Chinese were believed to control the Indonesian economy under Suharto and the majority of Chinese are Christians (Hefner: 1998a). Therefore, it was easy for the Muslims in Galela to believe that the global industry that took their land was a Christian industry.

During the political turmoil following Suharto's resignation, a competition took place between regional elites in Halmahera about how to address the injustices of the agro business. In the debate, competing parties made frequent use of ritual words like 'anti Suharto,' '*anti Orde Baru*' (anti New Order), 'anti globalisation' and 'anti Christianity' to win legitimacy and distinguish their movement from the old regime.[64] In the context of the North Moluccas, the Sultan of Ternate was considered part of the old regime. New slogans with ritual overtones were created by the Sultan's political rivals. Although the Sultan of Ternate is Muslim, his alliance with traditionally Christian ethnic groups and appeal to adat tradition, rather than religion made him a target of religiously nuanced attacks.

People responded to the anti-globalisation discourse because there were material promises that they would receive back their land. When anonymous sources appealed to religious identity in the struggle against agro business, it divided the

[64] cf. Hunt:1984, 21.

Christians and Muslims of Galela who had sold their land. Anonymous accusations by "provocateurs" underline the ritual-like manipulation of religious sentiment in favour of material interests. Competing powers and interests were clothed in religious symbols of legitimacy. In the language of rumour, physical threats against life and property occurred almost daily. As tensions increased, false rumours were transformed into facts. Each group built solidarity through charges against their "enemies". The image of an enemy was clothed with religious discourse.[65] These others were then attacked based on the conviction that these charges were true. Gradually, subjective convictions transformed rumours into reality. As a result of apocalyptic, mob rumours, people embraced violence as their fate. A forged letter, allegedly from religious authorities, articulated the desire for unilateral religious control of the Moluccas. This was used to rationalise the use of violence in the religious defence of the land. Religious rituals involved their participants in a totalising perspective on the events that demonised their enemies and transformed resistance into holy war. Violence exploded as unknown rioters began to attack.

2.1.3.3. The Politics of Negotiation in Ritual

Territory is important for anybody. It was the cause of the burning violence in the North Moluccas's religious war. The use of religious territorial concepts as a war liturgy to commit people to violence shows the development of political constellations in the landscape of Indonesian politics when Suharto was in power up to now. In the North Moluccas the territory of an ethnic group is a genealogical territory. An act of territorial change is done through a physical action called *"tola gumi",* which indicates the line of a new border by cutting down (*tola*) hanging vines (*gumi*). This practice is a part of the ritual marking of a boundary or border, for example where the boundaries of cultivated land are indicated in the forest (Visser: 1989). On a larger scale, a dynastic empire such as the Sultan of Ternate used to claim his borders by sending his family members and official servants to set up a formal network of district overseers called, *soa* (van Fraassen: 1999). After the end of colonialism, neither genealogical nor religious territory could be used to unite the territory of a united Indonesia. However the State established the ideology of Pancasila as a sacred border that encompassed and united the "family" of Indonesia. Declarations of allegiance to Pancasila became a collective ritual for uniting and preserving the nation-state of Indonesia. Pancasila also became a sacred mantra for legitimising the power of the New Order.

After the violence in Halmahera subsided, the people realised that they needed a ritual negotiation, similar to the one portrayed in the story of *the wedding party*, if they want to return to their homeland. Therefore, they invented a territory ritual, called *tona ma langi*, the boundary setting of territory or land, to establish a new agreement of peace among the people. They strengthened the ethnic borders and de-emphasised religious divisions. Rituals were performed to strengthen interreligious and ethnic family ties and help people recover from the trauma of violence.[66]

[65] cf. Bathust:1993 and Dudley:1991.
[66] cf. Sturken:1997,73.

The state can play a positive role in promoting rituals that encourage different ethnic and religious groups to live together in peace. Unfortunately the state often exacerbates conflict by linking local problems with regional, national or international interests. On the other hand, there is a tendency in the national discourse to blame all conflicts on the central government and assume that ethnic and religious conflicts cannot be stopped with negotiations but require a total revolution in which the ideology of the state is changed.

For Indonesia, in the context of multiculturalism, local rituals can contribute to nation building if political pressures from the dominant discourse are used in a moderate way. The principles of exchange practiced in the North Moluccas discourage the tendency to take action that only benefits the stronger party. Rather than stimulating healthy exchange, state elites often use conflict as an opportunity to build their own empires. The Indonesian elites use the symbol of the great national family[67] to resolve local conflicts in a way that benefits the national leadership, without paying attention to the principles of exchange that are practiced in common society. Local rebellions are often a protest against the stagnation of the exchange system and the growing gap between social classes.

Some Indonesians believe we need a new ritual structure to break out of the decadent structures of the past.[68] Included in the "ritual repertoire" of current Indonesian discourse is the rise of interest in making Indonesia a religious state. This political desire is problematic for most Indonesian Muslims since the universal ideal of an Islamic state is also exclusive and threatens other universal values such as universal citizenships, equal rights to civic participant, equal treatment under the law and religious freedom.[69] My data suggests that positive Islamic practices in Ngidiho before the violence demonstrate the capacity of Islam to adjust with the local culture.[70] In contrast, imported ideologies stimulated the violence. Ritual practices among Muslims in Indonesia are very diverse and efforts to homogenize them will impoverish the nation.

Power should be negotiated rather than centralized as in the Javanese idea of the integral state (Supomo in Feith and Castle: 1970 [1945]). Religious values enrich the reformation of Indonesian life by informing national rituals in a way that does not exclude freedom for regional and local practices as well. The exploration of social arrangements enshrined in the practices of exchange can minimize the tendency to centralize power in terms of majority and minority conceptions (Eisenstadt and Roniger: 1980, 42-77). Competition between elites and ethnic groups can be channelled through the politics of exchange in which each region

[67] cf. Sullivan: 1991.
[68] cf. Hunt: 1984, 12.
[69] cf. An-Na'im: 1994b; Hidayat: 2001; Siddiqui:1997, 196-197. See Chapter VIII.
[70] For example, the capacity of the local people, both the Muslim and Christian to bargain with the global banana company, PT GAI to rearrange their policy regarding female labour. The people demanded that the company give rice to female labours along with their husbands who also work at the company.

shares its superior products. This dissertation tries to locate the practices of ritual that are useful in the struggle to create justice in the world.

In conclusion, I would like to show why this study is of the politics of ritual and not a study of the politics of religion. To answer this question, I would like to concentrate on two facts. Firstly, in gathering data, I conclude that political identity is not always legitimised with reference to religion. Legitimacy can be derived from local practices that are not structured by a religious institution. The decision of where the people look for legitimacy depends on the political support they can get to exercise their power to choose from the available options that are accessible within their local knowledge systems. Secondly, ritual transcends the categories of religion and the sacred by including the social, economic and cultural affairs. In Indonesia "religion" is limited by referring primarily to the institutions of the five recognized religions. However in the practices of the people ritual intrudes into all areas of life, including activities that are usually not considered sacred or religious but are based on conscious beliefs. The actual practice of ritual exchange as it appears in the common practices of Ngidiho shows how family ideology is taken into political practices.

2.2. Genealogy of a Research Project

In the following discussion, I would like to show how an ecclectic approach helps me to understand the field of study. My field of study is the people in Ngidiho who are interwoven with various networks and structures within and outside their community. As a field of study, the people in Ngidiho are a whole world that is waiting to be discovered. I try to use their voices and perspectives to portray their own world and its surroundings. Geertz warns of the danger of arbitrary eclecticism that sometimes produces superficial and confusing results (Geertz: 1993, 88). His suggestion to link fieldwork analysis a bigger dialog between thick description and thin theoretical conceptualisation encourages me to be self-critical and careful in minimizing the epistemological and methodological problems that may occur from this research (Geertz: 1993, 6-7).

2.2.1. How to Proceed

My research changed direction because of the outbreak of violence in the village where I was doing fieldwork, starting in August, 1999. I decided to address how globalisation of resource management provoked competition for power, and how rituals were adapted as a means for mobilising different groups to violence. The issue of agricultural modernisation as a dominant factor in social change was a major theme of my research in Ngidiho in 1995-1996 and 1999. Globalisation spread to this area through trade, colonialism, religion and modern, developmental ideologies. Since the colonial period globalisation has had a great impact on the lives of the people and led them to create rituals in order to mediate conflict and promote social integration.

After the revision of my research plan, I came out with two hypotheses as a guidance to begin this writing. *First,* violence that occurs in a society as a result of resource competition can lead to the social construction of a ritualising process. *Secondly,* a society is able to create rituals, which combine different ideological agendas as a negotiation tool to reconcile with each other.

The central questions of this research can be formulated as follows:

1). What is the meaning of ritual and how does it function to create both solidarity and conflict in the community, thus influencing the formation of the people's identities in North Moluccas?

2). How did political practices during the colonial period and Indonesian state rituals, shape regional political identities in North Moluccas?

Every chapter is located in the bigger picture of these central questions. However each chapter is guided by its own goals. Chapter I explained the personal methodology that was shaped by the outbreak of violence during my fieldwork. Chapter II maps a theoretical framework for understanding the definition of ritual and its relation to politics. Chapter III focuses on the question of to what extent are the everyday practices of the Ngidiho people part of their production of political culture? Chapter IV answers the question of to what extent did political practices during the colonial period influence the formation of the people's identity, as shown in their rituals? Chapter V shows how the Indonesian state uses rituals in its political practices. Chapter VI explains how the people created rituals of conflict. Chapter VII examines how rituals were shaped and reinterpreted by the people in order to cope with the massive trauma after the violence in 1999-2000. Chapter VIII discusses the role of the state in facilitating collective rituals that minimize conflict and strengthen integration in Indonesia. The book ends with a conclusion in Chapter IX.

2.2.2. Strategy in the Field

When I came to Ngidiho in August 1999 I was fascinated by how the people created their world through practices and concepts, which had been passed down for generations. After the village was burned to the ground, I had a chance to reflect on a large amount of data that I had collected. I interpreted the data according to themes that gave me an understanding of identity formation, village livelihood and power structures in the society. Before I arrived in Ngidiho, when I was still taking classes in Amsterdam, I was planning to do a general survey in order to choose some households as my informants. However, I came to realize that informal discussions with groups or individuals gave a more complex picture of the people in Ngidiho. This helped me to design my questions and to select informants. My time at the village was filled with listening and asking as many as question I could. In the process of my research, I constantly reformulated initial questions to reveal the reality of the people in Galela. The dynamic of making creative questions was built on the dialectic between the answers and actions

people presented in relating to my questions. The application of this method follows the hermeneutic principle used in my earlier explanation about interpreting ritual.

Located in Galela, I chose Ngidiho as the focus of my research. It was one of three villages included in the administrative district where the banana agro business was located. Ngidiho was closest to the banana agro business complex, which begins about 100 meters to the North. Ngidiho was the recipient of two different government projects for Family Planning (1997-1999) and Health (1999). They used different characteristics or criteria to select the households, which would participate in these projects. For the Family Planning project, they selected poor families based on the construction of their houses and amount of their belongings. For example, houses that were constructed without a cement floor or a corrugated roof were considered unhealthy and poor. In reality these criteria were often misleading because people might have a nice house but have lost the land where they used to plant coconuts or other crops. These people used to own their own land but they sold it to the PT GAI, a multinational that exports bananas (Risakotta: 1995a). The Health Project emphasized criteria such as available ventilation, a clean toilet, and clean water from a well.

I used my own criteria for selecting different categories of households as my informants. Firstly, I chose households that had three generations living under the same roof, owned their own land (*raki* and *dori*) and who pooled their income together for basic family needs. Their income came from agricultural work and they sold their own produce. The second category of respondents consisted of three-generation families who no longer owned any land (*raki* or *doro*), where they could do agricultural work. However some of the household's income may come from family members who work for the banana company or do other petty business. A third category of respondents was nuclear family households who don't own any land (*raki* and *doro*), and work at the banana plantation. The fourth category includes nuclear families that still own their own plantations but also work at the banana agro business.

With a total of 230 households, inhabited by 188 Muslim and 42 Christian families, my research included a selective sample of 20 households in the first category, 25 households in the second, 30 households in the third category and 15 households in the last category. My informants included 80 Muslim households and 10 Christian households. Thus the total number of the respondents was 90 households most of whom were indigenous to Ngidiho. Households inevitably included some members who had married into the family from other villages. Some of them stayed at the village and some stayed in barracks or apartments provided by the banana company. My work was not finished yet when the riots in Halmahera exploded on December 27, 1999. However, I had already interviewed 75 households in the village from all four groups before I left in early December (about 83 % of my target).

The interviews I conducted with respondents at the village concerned issues of peasant livelihood, including their production levels, the distribution of resources among them, their system of economic exchange and survival, and the policies within their households. Fortunately, I stayed with a Muslim household headed by *Oom* Din, a religious and community leader who loved to tell stories. He was my most valuable informant as he provided many clues that helped me dig out insights that revealed a picture of his personal life as well as of other people's lives. He was my teacher on the customs, religion and rituals of the Galela. Another old, Christian man, who was originally from the neighbouring village of Limau, also helped explain things, which I didn't understand.

The Head of the village (*Kepala Desa*), whom I have known since I conducted my M.A. research in Halmahera, was surprised and pleased when I said that I would like to stay with a Muslim family. There were several basic requirements I asked of him. For example, the household should have several generations of the same family staying together under a common roof. The members of the family should not include an official government servant of the village. Even though, he didn't understand my explanation of why this was important, he quickly found a family, which matched my criteria. In the morning of August 21, 1999, after my husband and I had spent the night at the house of the village Head, *Oom* Din informed me that I would stay with him. His house was located just across the road from the Kepala Desa. *Oom* Din's family's taught me how to behave according to Ngidiho's customs. I was not allowed to pay rent for my room. The culturally acceptable way to pay was for me to shop and pay for all the food of the household each week. Most of my field research was among Muslims.

My contact with other villages was usually connected to village activities that included people from Ngidiho, for example, marriage parties, funerals and other festivals, economic activities and festive or just a common visit to family and friends. In my first research proposal I was going to do a comparative study of a Muslim village (Ngidiho), and a Christian village (Duma), to see the impact of religion on their behaviour in dealing with the agricultural transformation of Galela. Duma is located on the interior shore of Lake Galela to the East of Ngidiho. However, I abandoned this plan because there were too many different, independent variables involved that would make it difficult to do a comparative study. Nevertheless, I did conduct a few interviews in Duma before my departure to Java, although it was not enough for a useful comparison. There is data available on the local religious transformations that were brought about by contact with Christianity.[71] Some Christian practices and perceptions are recorded in my interviews with Christians from Ngidiho or Duma. However most of my interviews with Christians from Galela and elsewhere in Halmahera were conducted outside of Halmahera after the violence engulfed the island. I met many people from Duma or other villages from Halmahera when I conducted a month of interviews in August 2000 among the refugees in their camps and in hospitals in Bitung and Manado (North Sulawesi). During the time when I could

[71] For example in Naomichi (1980), Haire (1981), Platenkamp (1988), Ajaiwaila (1996).

not go to Ngidiho, my only contact with the Muslims of Ngidiho was through the telephone.

My relations with the minority of Christians in Ngidiho included some participation in church activities and general socializing. Some were included in interviews I arranged with the target informants. However, I refused repeated invitations to preach, teach or play an official role in the church. Shortly before leaving for Java, the pastor of the church asked me to give one sermon to the people. It was hard to reject because they, as a congregation, needed a fresh message to encourage them to guard their unity and integration with the Muslims of Ngidiho. In addition to preaching once, I was also asked to give a speech to the whole village of Ngidiho at a village meeting in front of the *Kepala Desa's* house. After the riots in Ternate and Tidore erupted, the leading men of the village had a meeting to discuss the possible consequences of the violence on the people of Ngidiho and what actions might be taken to prevent the expansion of the riots to Galela. We talked until 3 am.

Two weeks before my departure to Java at the end of November 1999 I conducted interviews with banana company executives, managers and foremen. I also interviewed copra collectors in Galela and Tobelo who buy from the village cooperatives and bank officials who support the economic life of the people in Galela through loans. The interviews with the provincial leaders in Ternate were conducted before and after the religious war occurred in the North Moluccas. In Tobelo and Galela, I held interviews with governmental, spiritual and social leaders before and after the 1999-2000 violence in Halmahera. Interviews with Christian leaders after the violence were conducted in Manado (North Sulawesi). However most interviews with Muslim leaders after the riots were conducted through telephone. I did conduct interviews with some Muslim leaders in Ternate just right after the eviction of Christians from Ternate and Tidore in earlier November 1999. I reconfirmed the details of the Ngidiho villager's account of the civil warfare, from both Muslim and Christian perspectives when I revisited them in February 2002.

One interesting approach, carried out with some female teenagers and housewives in the dining room of *Oom* Din, was to draw a map of the village that showed where each family lived. Within two working days, I heard many stories about many of the people of Ngidiho. The women liked to gossip. Later, I used the information they shared as an entrance to get to know the people personally. When the map was made, I took a walk with about ten teenagers and some children, just to pass by the houses of the people. The teenagers would add more information by explaining things like the condition of animals that the people owned. Sometime they reflected on the belongings and economic status of their parents. My camera also presented itself as a helpful tool for me to make friends with people. They loved to see pictures of themselves and their friends. I heard many stories about the people who appeared in my photographs. Gossip, stories and rumours that are not "scientific data" actually provided an entrance into understanding how the people see each other. People wondered why I paid

attention to their ordinary, normal, everyday lives. At the beginning they were surprised by the simple questions I asked. After they knew that I really want to study and to live with them, they would tell me everything.

Pictures 11 – 13: Drawing a village map with female teenagers and adults; Children were part of the action during our walk to draw the map; A mother cow and her baby during our journey through the village.

Cooking provided another entrance to open a discussion with people about their lives. During my stay with my household, Wednesday was my cooking day. Of course, I helped *mama* Iana, and her two married daughters, Sahadiah and Sarnawiah in their kitchen every day, which gave me a chance to think about how to modify their practices when my turn came. On Wednesdays I made breakfast, lunch and dinner. I used local ingredients to cook my meals. Cooking is an art form. My attempts to modify Galelan cooking always stimulated deep conversations during and after enjoying the meal. The people would share their own experiences on how they modified dishes that came to them from outside. Then we would continue to talk about the practices and social arrangement the family and neighbours in Ngidiho. The discussion was especially interesting because every Wednesday *Oom* Din's large extended family visited our house to taste and to take home the dishes I cooked. This day was also a writing day. I didn't go out except to welcome guests who came to taste my cooking. After long conversations I would write down observations and reflections on my experiences with the Ngidiho people that week.

Some people were suspicious of my habit of writing down every single word in my little notebook each time I had a conversation with them. In the middle of October 1999, war broke out again in Malifut-Kao and thousands of Makian people fled from Halmahera to Ternate and Tidore. In Tidore and Ternate, Christians were attacked and forced to flee. In the context of increasing tension, some men of Ngidiho became suspicious of my presence in their village. They wondered whether my presence was connected with the religious conflict in the Moluccas. Since I have Ambonese blood and one of the pastors who was killed in Tidore was named Risakotta (a distant relative), there were questions about my motives in living with them. In November 1999, before my departure to Ternate on the way to Java, I was talking with the Secretary of the District of Galela, when a young man entered the office and interrogated me for about an hour. However, an extensive explanation about the purpose of my study seemed to overcome most people's doubts and restore their trust.

After leaving Halmahera, I stayed in Yogyakarta for about a year from January 2000 until February 2001. During the month of August 2000 I stayed in Bitung and Manado in North Sulawesi to meet refugees from the North Moluccas. While in Yogyakarta, I collected information about the violence in the Moluccas, reflecting on my experience, and studying the discourse in the media about the role of religion in the conflict. I gathered extensive newspaper clippings of articles that show the discourse, especially among Indonesian Muslims, about the conflict in the Moluccas, religion and violence, Islam and the state, etc. I was invited to several conferences, including a meeting of Muslim activists concerned about the increase in religiously related violence in Yogyakarta. These experiences enriched my perspective, especially in understanding how Javanese Muslims portray the religious conflict in the Moluccas.

In February 2002, I returned to the North Moluccas to study how the process of reconciliation has taken place in the region. In Tobelo I stayed with *Oom* Din's relatives who are Christians. With them I visited my Muslim household in Ngidiho. Even though Christians were not yet permitted to stay in Ngidiho, it was a touching reunion. I felt so relieved that they are all still alive. I also visited the village of Kao in Halmahera and stayed for a few days with a close Muslim family in Ternate. This trip contributed to the special chapter on the politics of memory and forgetting recorded in Chapter VII. Later, in March 2004, I was nominated by the National Awaking Party (PKB) to run for the Indonesian National Parliament to represent the Province of the North Moluccas. This brought me back to the North Moluccas to campaign among Muslims and Christians. My first campaign in North Halmahera was in Ngidiho where the Head of the village, Basarudin Ayub was also nominated by PKB to run for Regency office in Tobelo. I discuss the contribution of this trip in the *Forword* of this dissertation. I understand my PhD dissertation research as part of a larger effort to bring reconciliation to the region.[72]

[72] Adeney-Risakotta, Farsijana. "Running for Office. A Christian candidate for a Muslim party in North Maluku" (16). In: Inside Indonesia. No.79, July - September 2004. Australia: Collingwood.

2.3. Closing Remarks

As an analytical lens, ritual helps to examine how the political changes in the national arena affect people at the village level. Ritual mediates transitions, not only in the human lifecycle but also in crisis transitions of a particular society. Ritual links the past with the present lives of the people. The need to create an integrated Indonesian state was confronted with the fact that there is a gap between middle class-intellectuals and common people. Another gap lies between different ethnic and religious groups. After colonialism, the Indonesian leadership created national rituals to bridge socio-cultural differences and serve the particular political agendas of local groups.

As a means of integration, ritual unites and mobilises people to negotiate and achieve their political agreement in a representative way. Sometimes the process of negotiation is strengthened by reference to sacred values that are legitimised by all parties involved. In a context of conflict, ritual can mobilise people to oppose a power structure or to suppress another group's interests. Groups legitimise their violent action through powerful ritual symbols. In light of the above, this research is concerned with social change on a large scale, whose meaning is just as significant as the social change that takes place at a very local level. Ritual is given meaning and practiced, starting at the level of the family and moving up to associations, villages, districts, provinces and countries.

Ever since the colonial period, when agricultural production in Halmahera was adjusted to the needs of Europe, Ngidiho has been influenced by large political changes within its global network of relations. Each new regime used ritual politics to mobilise its followers and to distinguish its repertoire from its competitors. In recent events, outside elites stimulated potential local conflicts and used internationally validated ideologies as ritual tools to drive the people to commit violence. However, this study also suggests that there is no absolute power that can completely dominate a society that has its own complex identity. The people of Galela are still creating life together with the help of local rituals that gather and negotiate their power.

Chapter III
Everyday Life and Livehood in Ngidiho

> "Better there should be no prayer than excessive offering; a gift always looks for recompense. Better there should be no sacrifice that an excessive slaughter" (Poem from Edda, quoted by Mauss: 1954, xiv).

This section will discuss practices that are adjusted as the result of social change and the political realities in the village. Beginning with a discussion of family practices we will sketch a picture of life in Ngidiho and see how the society created the image of the enemy. When people in Ngidiho connect with strangers from outside, for example through trade, they still regulate the relationships with ritual. In this chapter I will address the question of how the everyday practices of the Ngidiho people are a part of the political production of their culture.
The answer to this question will help us understand the reconstruction of the 1999-2000 violence that occurred in Ngidiho and its surrounding areas and the process of reconciliation that began to take place in October 2000.

The dynamics between material changes and the everyday practices of the society in Ngidiho led to ideological changes in the politics of ritual. Modernization of agriculture created new structures within kin-networks and changed living patterns. Sometimes within the same material context, several different concepts are used to explain the same meanings. For example, the meaning of local religious practices are adapted to Muslim or Christian doctrine, but without losing their old meanings either. The phenomena of remaking and unmaking practices also takes place with regard to modern rituals such as the everyday routines of the banana agrobusiness in Galela.

3.1. Kinship, Neighbourhoods, and Enemies

How do the people of Galela understand their relationships within the categories of kinship, neighbourhood, and enemy? Beginning with a description of kin and affinity relationships, I will explain how the ritual system, as a medium of communication, functions to build relationships and avoid the conflicts that commonly appear among them. Rituals are also created to tie together people who do not have a genealogical connection. This chapter opens with an account of a ritual healing by *Oom* Din. Healing is a moral practice in which people perceive powers of good and evil that can effect the whole community. Community networks of healing show the moral commitment of its members to each other. This section ends with some observations about "trust" and "the enemy" according to the people of Ngidiho.

3.1.1. Making People Aware

In every day life, *Oom* Din dedicates himself to helping other people. His house is often full of people who come for healing. *Oom* Din always says that people get sick because their actions are opposed to the traditional rhythms of their everyday life. Therefore the healing rituals conducted by *Oom* Din are intended to make people aware of their wrong action. Before the ritual healing begins, *Oom* Din will ask the patient about the history of their sickness. If the person is too weak to tell their own story, the person who brought the patient is asked to explain the history of their problem.

While paying attention to the stories carefully and without saying anything, *Oom* Din will prepare warm water to mix with cold water. He prepares a full washbasin of warm water to pour on the head of the patient. After he says a silent prayer while moving his lips, *Oom* Din will invite the patient to go out to the side of his house where *Oom* Din will bathe the patient. If the patient is a teenager girl or an adult woman, she covers her body with a sarong. A teenager boy or an adult man just wears shorts, while children are bathed naked. After that, the patient is covered with dry clothes and taken back into the house of *Oom* Din.

Before the patient leaves the house, *Oom* Din will whisper in the ear of the patient how the sickness can be cured. If the patient is a child, *Oom* Din will tell his secret to the parent of the child. However *Oom* Din doesn't tell directly how the patient got the sickness. *Oom* Din talks very quietly about this matter so that other people in his house will not hear what he says. In the process of healing, a member of the family where the patient lives will prepare yellow rice cooked with special ingredients (*dada*) and deliver it to *Oom* Din. That is a sign for *Oom* Din again to prepare warm water to bath the patient who is beginning to feel better.

One morning, when we had just started our breakfast, a woman came with her one-year-old son to *Oom* Din's house. Along with them came grandmother Nafisah, who had just recovered from her sickness, and another woman who was carrying *dada*. I had seen this process before and knew it indicated the patient was getting better. But this time I observed the relationship between *dada* and the healing process for the patient. That morning, after *Oom* Din prayed over the *dada*, the mother of the little boy fed him. The boy ate ravenously.

I smiled to see the healing process happening in front of me. I began to understand that the *dada* was given to the child with two purposes. Firstly, the aroma of the delicious *dada*, stimulated the appetite of the person whose tongue felt bitter. Feeding *dada* to the boy also signified pushing out the germs of the sickness and refilling the patient with new strength. Life giving food replaces the germs in the boy's body. The ritual offering of food includes a pattern of material exchange in the understanding of the people in Galela, which includes both spiritual (non-material), and material meaning.

Pictures 14–15: *Oom* Din gives a bath to an old patient; The patient eats *dada.*

After the patients left the house, I discussed these ideas with *Oom* Din. *Oom* Din laughed out loud and said that the offering of food not only has "vertical meaning" (offering to the ancestors), but also a "horizontal meaning" of service to his neighbours. I was surprised. This view contrasts with my experience when I stayed with the second cousin of my mother in Yogyakarta during my senior high school. Even though they were strict Javanese Muslims, the family also routinely practiced Javanese rituals.[73] Every Monday and Thursday night, she made a special *sajen* (offering) to respect her ancestral spirits. However this "sajen" was never used to feed someone who was sick.

Platenkamp quotes the report of Christian missionaries who lived in the late 19th century saying that the Galela people prepared their offerings in respect for their family members who had already died (Platenkamp: 1988, 186). However the offering was not fed to the living people. The purpose of feeding ancestors *(o diliki)* is to control the power of those ancestors who died an unnatural death, and could still bother the living.. At least once a year the people had to observe the ritual of offering food to their ancestors (Platenkamp: 1988, 104-105).[74] In light of

[73] *Sajen* is a special offering of food to the spirits. (Geertz: 1960, 41-44). *Sajen* are prepared on Thursday nights, which according to the Javanese are considered part of Friday. The Javanese include a *sajen* in most of their ceremonies. The leader of the ritual drinks the water of the *sajen* or he can sprinkle the water onto those who wait for a blessing, which will guarantee safety and peace. In the annual ritual of cleaning the village (*bersih desa*), the people prepare *sajen* with a cooked meal or raw rice. The food is later given to the poor people (Geertz: 1960, 25). Teruo Sekimoto describes the process of similar ritual ceremonies within contemporary Javanese celebrations of Independence Day in Indonesia on August 17 (Sekimoto: 1990, 65).

[74] Geertz says that in Javanese tradition, the aroma of the yellow rice used in the *sajen* attracts the ancestral spirit to eat the offering (Geertz:1960, 9,11). The same explanation can be found in the ritual of eating together *(ngorom lamo'o)* in *sabua* (a tradition open pavilion) in Sahu (Visser: 1989). In Tobelo, before the presence of the universal religions, people carried out the *gomanga yo hakai* ritual, which offers food for the ancestral spirits (Djurubasa: 2000, 42).

this, I suspect that the healing practices carried out by *Oom* Din included an Islamic influence in which the meaning of an offering was reinterpreted logically to make it conform to Islamic doctrine.

During my stay there was government-sponsored housing for nurses in Ngidiho.[75] However there were no medical workers occupying the house. *Oom* Din offered the only medical care in town. He has been working as a healer (*Sou-Sou*)[76] for many years.[77] He doesn't ask for payment from those who need his services although, like most *dukuns*, he does accept gifts whose amount depends on the success of his treatment and the economic ability of the patient.[78] According to *Oom* Din, his treatments would not cure the patient if he didn't do them with a sincere heart and without self-interest (*tanpa pamrih*). He learned his traditional healing powers as a response to combat the power of a rival in the village who had used his powers to oppose him. *Oom* Din was forced to leave Ngidiho and he stayed on the island of Morotai for about 10 years, from 1969 to 1979. During this period, he only came to Ngidiho to visit his parents and relatives. He moved to Morotai because his mother came from that island. After his parents divorced, his mother went back to Morotai. There were two reasons that made *Oom* Din move to Morotai. First, he was not strong enough to oppose the magic forces that were sent by his enemy against his family members. His wife and children always got sick when they first arrived in Ngidiho. Secondly, during his stay in Morotai, he used this opportunity to learn from a famous *Sou-Sou*.

"I became a *Sou-Sou* to stand up to another *Sou-Sou* who always used his power to endanger people whom he saw as his rivals," *Oom* Din explained to me when I asked why he was attracted to become a *Sou-Sou*. "The *Sou-Sou* hated me because I am the heir of the *Kimalaha*,[79] who traditionally has the right to lead this village. Therefore the *Sou-Sou* was afraid that I might be chosen as the head of village,

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[75] The District government arranges to place nurses in remote regions, which are far from public health services. According to the Village Head in Ngidiho there use to be a nurse who already left and moved to Tobelo because of her marriage. However once a month, there was *Posyandu* group. *Posyandu* is an abbreviation for a centre for women and children's health services, which is mainly concerned for the health of pregnant mothers and children below the age of 5 years.

[76] Literally *Sou-Sou* means medicine, or a person knowing medicine.

[77] Ishige concludes that sometimes a *Sou-Sou* (healer) is *Gomahate* (Indonesian: *dukun*; English: a shaman). In his research, he found that in Galela it is not easy to acknowledge that a person is a *Sou-Sou* because they might be accused of being part of a deviate sect (Ishige: 1989, 439). I didn't observe this reluctance in the Muslim community in Ngidiho. *Oom* Din always called himself a *Sou-sou*. The mother of Mala, the bride I described in the narration of *the wedding party*, is also a *Sou-Sou*. Djurubasa says that the healing process before the period of the universal religions was carried out by a *Gomahate* (the Galelan term) or a *gomatere* (the Tobelanese term) which means a shaman. *Sou-Sou* (the Galela term) or *You Houhouru* (the Tobelo word) is a healer who also cures people from spirit possession (Djurubasa: 2000, 53).

[78] Ishige states that there was no standard payment. However the patient typically pays in accordance with the success of the treatment and their financial capability (Ishige: 1980, 440). Djurubasa says the gift that the patient gives to the healer is a sign of thanksgiving rather than a standardised fee, because the effectiveness of the treatment depends on the compatibility of the *yo houhouru* (magic formula) with the sources of sickness in the patient. In the healing process, the patient first receives water that has been already blessed with a formula to ensure compatibility.

[79] An explanation about changes in the political structural of Ngidiho is found at the end of this chapter.

continuing the position of *Kimalaha* that was inherited by my father."[80] After *Oom* Din became strong, he returned to Ngidiho and there were no disturbing problems that came to his family. He could even overcome the *Sou-Sou*. From this experience, *Oom* Din chose to become a *Sou-Sou* and a Muslim religious leader rather than becoming the Village Head, even though he has talent as a leader. The *Sou-Sou* who was hostile to *Oom* Din became the Head of the village for about 15 years, from 1970-1985. This former Village Head died about two years before I came to Ngidiho.

3.1.2. Relationships within Kin Networks

The centre of life for the Galela people lies within their families. Amoung the Galelan people, all descendents of a founding ancestor, through any combination of male or female links, are related to each other. Such a non-exclusive mode of tracing descent is called 'congnatic descent (cf. Keesing: 1981, 222-223). The smallest social unit relates to the word "house" (*o tahu*, Platenkamp: 1988, 76). The relations between people within the same house are called *ma-dutu* relations ("true, or truely my own relations"). The members refer to each other as *gia-dutu* ("one owner", Platenkamp: 1988, 70-71,76). The *ma-dutu* relations within a family are understood as relations within a single, life-giving "stem" which shows them their original place of origin. Blood relationships were conceived as including those who live in a single *bangsaha* (great house), which contained at least three generations (Matsuzawa: 1980, 373).[81] Due to its function as a unified place for a family to stay, a *bangsaha* was also called, *o tahu moi* (one house, Ajawaila: 1996, 52ff) or *o tahu ma dutu* (my own house, Platenkamp: 1988, 10).[82]

Unfortunately the last of the great houses in Soa Sio (a village lying on the southern coastal area of Galela), was destroyed in 1930. Since then, people no longer use *bangsaha* as a model for their house construction, although it still retains its symbolic meaning (Matsuzawa: 1980, 373). The household of *Oom* Din, with 13 members of the family from three generations living together, illustrates how the change of the physical construction of the house did not change the essence of the family structure. Two families of two daughters, Sahadiah and Sarnawiah with their husbands and children, live together with *Oom* Din and his wife, *mama* Iana. Sahadiah has two children, and her youngest sister Sarnawiah

[80] His grandfather from his father's side was also the *Kimalaha*.

[81] Matsuzawa says that the terminology of genealogical relationships is complex because of the variety of terms that were formulated in connection with traditional practices in the structure of the *bangsaha* (Matsuzawa: 1980, 366). cf. (Ajawaila: 1996, 53).

[82] In his research on kinship, C.C. Harris distinguishes between kinship and family (see Harris: 1990). However Matsuzawa shows that the Galelan concept of family is differs with anthropological terminology. As an example, Harris says that family in general is understood as a domestic group where reproduction takes place (Harris: 1990, 27). However, there are no separate words for family and household in the Galela language (Matsuzawa: 1980, 348). The words family (*keluarga*), and household (*rumah tangga*), in Indonesian have distinct meanings. *Keluarga* (family) is a term that was borrowed from the Dutch and shows the core unit of kinship, including two parents, children from their blood, adopted children and members of their kin-network who stay together in the house (Matsuzawa: 1980, 349). According to Matsuzawa, the term "household" characterizes people who stay together and share the same family resources (Matsuzawa: 1980, 349).

has a boy. Two sons of *Oom* Din and a distant relative from the village of Bobane Igo also stayed in the house. The simple construction of house had three generations of people who lived together.[83]

In Galela, the Indonesian word family (*keluarga*) and its original term *o bolu moi* (one group) (Matsuzawa: 1980) and 'bilaterally extended family' (*rio-dodoto*)[84], are used interchangeably (Platenkamp: 1988, 76). A family doesn't have to stay in one house (*o tahu moi*) because family is defined in terms of kinship, not of residence. In general, the members of households in Ngidiho include members of the nuclear family household and relatives who are linked by the descent line. Social relationships within a kinship group in Galela encompass blood relationships (consanguines) and affinal relatives (Matsuzawa: 1980, 349). *O bolu moi* is a kindred relationship that is established through either the father or mother's side (Matsuzawa: 1980, 367).

Matsuzawa reports that the role of *o bolu moi* is very important, both economically and physically, for carrying out rituals in the Galela's life cycle, especially in connection with marriage and death. Relatives from the *o bolu moi* are expected to help out, not only in everyday life but also on special occasions (Matsuzawa: 1980, 356-362). The children of *Oom* Din never go to help a family who has a party unless they clearly understand their kin ties with the family. When I just arrived in Ngidiho, during the first week, there was a wedding party for a family related to *Oom* Din. However his children and wife didn't attend the party. We, *Oom* Din and myself, represented his family. Later, I found out from his daughter that the family holding the party only had a distant kin relationship with *Oom* Din. Therefore, Sahadiah did not feel close to them or obligated to attend. In contrast, she was involved in working for the success of her first cousin's wedding party, as portrayed in my narration of *the wedding party.*

The Galela are equally committed to both their cousins and their siblings. According to the people of Ngidiho, helping siblings should not be based on calculations of obligation. Support should be carried out according to capability of the person. *Upahe pae etoka* is a Ngidiho saying that means, calculating (obligations) between siblings fails to show true brother/sisterhood. Even if there is no material help, it is very important to just show up (*teke si dohawa*). In the relations of *o bolu moi*, a member of the family in the *modoka* or *doroa* lines attending a ritual performance by a relative, has to bring the determined gifts if they don't want to be humiliated by other members of the family. *Doroa* means the son-in-law.

In the household, a mother carries the status of the *modoka* line due to her marriage to her husband. When she attends the ritual ceremonies of her husband's family she has to bring *wajik* (sticky rice cooked with brown sugar and coconut milk), *halua* (canari nuts mixed with peanuts and brown sugar), *cucur* (fried cake

[83] The architecture of the house is simple and only has three bedrooms, one living room, and a dining room, located at the back of the house.

[84] *Rio-dodoto* means brothers and sisters who are not directly siblings of Ego. It refers to sister or brother-in-laws who are siblings through marriage.

made of rice flour and brown sugar), white sugar and *jomoto* (plaited mats). In the past, the *modoka* had to bring all of the gifts listed above. During my stay, they had to bring at least two of the dishes as gifts. *Doroa* is the functional title given to a man by his family-in law due to his marriage to his wife. When he participates in the ritual ceremonies of his wife's family, as a *doroa*, a husband has to bring *saguer* (liquor), *sago* (from the sago tree) and *ikan* (fish) (Matsuzawa: 1980, 356-362; see also Platenkamp: 1988, 191).[85]

Pictures 16-17: The *modoka* line comes to the party bringing its own special obligatory gifts.

If the gifts run out during a party, it affects the whole distributive system that is arranged in a pattern of giving and receiving in the marriage and death rituals of Ngidiho. When a guest from a family of the *modoka* line brings *wajik*, they return home carrying sago or fish. Similarly, a family of the *doroa* line brings fish and sago, and return home carrying *wajik* or sugar. Therefore, if a particular kind of gift runs out, there will be an inequality of distribution that will affect the exchange process in the kinship bonds. Other people who come to help with the party contribute rice or sugar according to the common agreements in the village. They receive meals but don't take home special gifts.[86]

In Galela, the "generation of ego" expresses the differences between siblings and cousins according to their gender. Two terms are used to signify sibling brothers and sibling sisters. A sibling sister is addressed as *bira* by a male ego and the female ego addresses her sibling brother as *hira*. Cousins address one another as *gia ma nongoru*. *Gia nongoru* means brothers and sisters (van Baarda: 1895:148). This term is also applied to young siblings and cousins from the same

[85] See the diagram of exchange below. After the Ngidiho people converted to Islam in the 1950s, the tradition of bringing local liquor became less common. Now the family from the *doroa* line only brings sago and fish.

[86] Guests, families and neighbours who come to help receive meals and drinks. If there is leftover food, neighbours may take some home to share with their household members. This practice also applies to the agricultural rituals at the time of planting and harvesting.

generation. From the eldest "ego" to the youngest of his or her siblings, all are members of one kin relationship (Ajawaila:1996, 55-56).

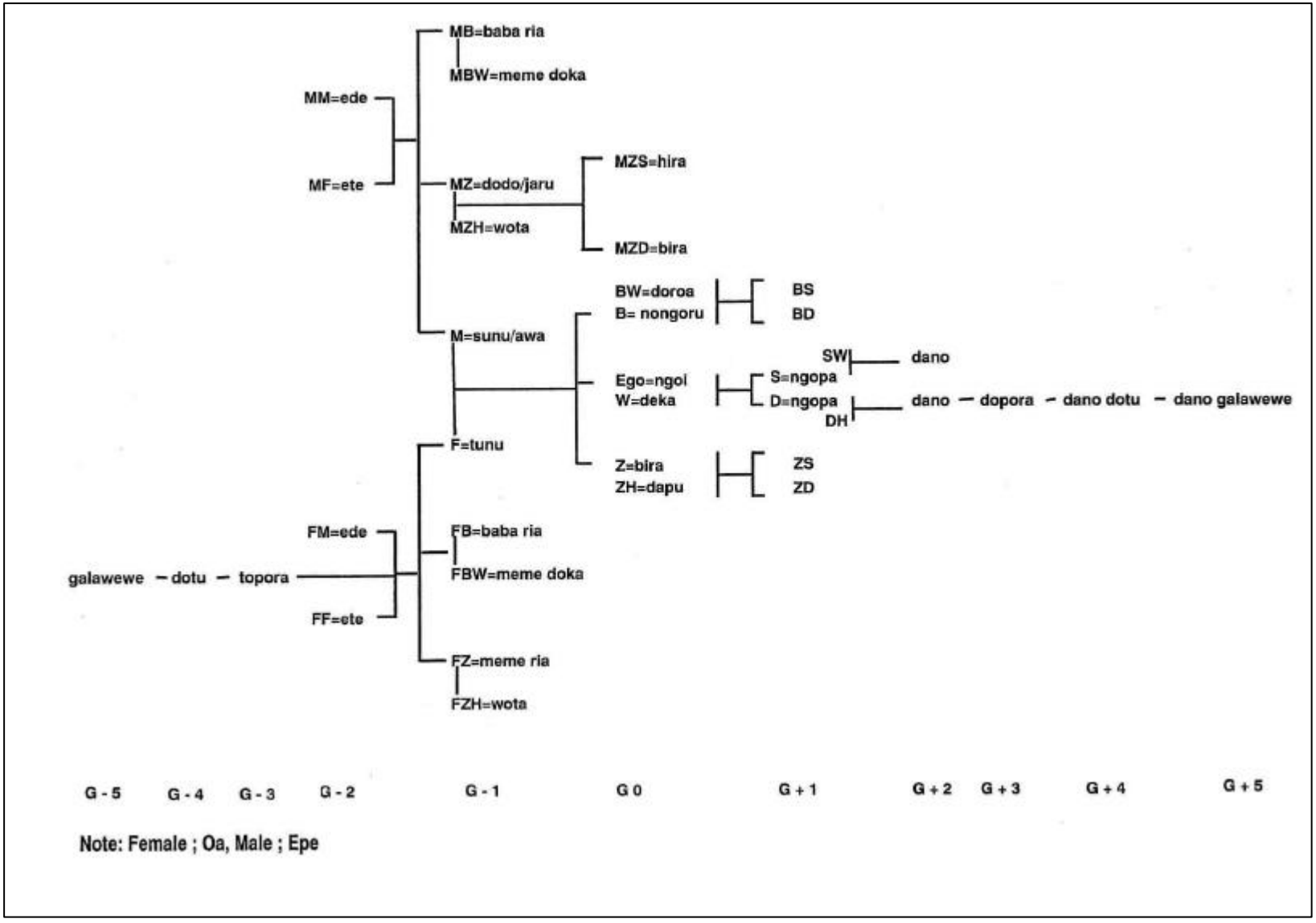
The terms *Oa* and *Epe* (Ajawaila: 1996, 57), *Owa* and *Epe* (Matsuzawa: 1980, 364) or *Awa* and *Epe* (van Baarda: 1908, 29) show the distinctions made for parents according to their gender. However all the siblings from the parents are called *wota*. This term does not differentiate the gender of specific siblings of the parents. *Baba ria* and *meme ria* are the names for the elder sibling's partner. *Meme doka* is the term used to refer to the FyBW (father's younger brother's wife) and the MyBW (mother's younger brother's wife). *Wota* refers to the FyZH (father's younger sister's husband) and the MyZH (mother's younger sister's husband) (Ajawaila: 1996, 57). The elder brother of the Ego's father and the sister of the Ego's mother are called *dodo* and *jaru*. The elder brother of the Ego's father and the elder sister of the Ego's mother take custody of the Ego if her/his parents die.[87]

A daughter doesn't have the right to inherit her family's land, because she shares in the ownership of her husband's land. However if she helps in the process of planting coconuts, she has rights to the trees that are planted.[88] The principle that women get land from their husbands should not be understood as just receiving free land. Women play an equal role with men in building the family economy of Galela. If they get divorced the land is divided equally between the woman and the man. Men or women can expand their land if they work together opening up new land from the jungle. In November 1999, in Galela, there were many women who owned their own land. The men of Ngidiho call a mother, hajj Fatma Bakali, "a strong woman", because she has divorced her husbands five times! The Ngidiho men say to this woman, *ngopodeka koma gena nayahiwa,* which means: "Another woman like you is not to be found in Galela!" However she believes that her husbands were lazy. She owns a little store where she sells household necessities to the villagers in Ngidiho. From her income from this store she bought more land for expanding her coconut plantation. She doesn't plant by herself but rather hires other people to plant and take care of her plantation. Several forewomen at PT GAI, the Banana Company also own their own coconut plantations and hire others to do the physical work of caring for them.

[87] In the society of Galela, the rights of an Ego are received from either the father-line or the mother-line. If an Ego is a single daughter including a single child, then the right to inherit the family property goes to her directly. However, the female Ego has an obligation to participate in the exchange rituals within her genealogical lines, such as the *modoka* line from her mother's side and the *doroa* line from her father's side. Although the female Ego participates in two lines, her mother's side and her father's side, nevertheless surnames are given according to a patriarchal system (patrilineal descent) (See Matsuzawa: 1980, 364ff).

[88] Platenkamp reports that if a woman gets a divorce and returns to her parent's house, her rights to the trees on her parent's property are given back to her (Platenkamp: 1988, 82).

Figure 1: Kin Terminology in Galela



3.1.2.1. Types of Households in Ngidiho

There is no universal definition of the word "household". The material context of a household determines its definition. Households are sometimes defined in relation to two main features that are connected with their social context. First, a household is defined as an institution whose members pool their resources because each of them has cash. Secondly, a household is also the community where its members consume their incomes (Wong: 1984, 57-61).

These definitions apply to the households of Ngidiho. The two characteristics account for the importance of kinship and enduring family ties in the determination of who contributes what to the common income. A Household is not independent as a separated island, but it also relates to a broader family bond. For example, Sarnawiah, the daughter of *Oom* Din could not contribute money to her parent's household because she doesn't work and her husband refuses to give her money. He hopes that he and his family will be kicked out of his parent-in-law's house. However, due to the fact that Sarnawiah's husband didn't pay the bride wealth, his family and himself have to stay at his parent-in-law's house. He had to turn down the opportunity to stay in a house provided by PT GAI, the Banana Company, because of his obligation to work for his in-laws.

'Poor in cash' is a common phenomena in Ngidiho. People who own land may be rich in resources or in earning power from their family's labour, but poor in cash. Many households in Ngidiho rely on the cooperative stores who provide everything they need, from fertilizer to toothpaste, on credit. When the coconuts or copra is harvested, or when payday comes at the banana plantation, they pay off their debts to the store. Each member of a household contributes the products of their labour to meet the common needs of the household.

Households in Ngidiho may be classified by the responsibilities of the members based on tradition *(adat),* as in the case of *Oom* Din's daughter and her husband. But they may also be classified by their primary purposes and goals. These goals are dependent on the changing economic system on which the household relies. Almost all of the respondents from households whom I interviewed said that the main purpose of their work was to have their own plantation.[89] With the income from their plantations they could build their own houses and pay for the school expenses of their children.

My research suggests four types of households in Ngidiho. The first type includes three generations of family living together in which the parents own their own land and have sufficient income for the whole family. In one example of this type, the youngest son and his family provided leadership in the household, whose

[89] I chose to interview 90 households which where picked to represent the different types. From the total number of households chosen, 20 households were categorised as the first model, 25 households representated the second model, 30 households belonged to the third model and the last model was represented by 15 households. However because of the violence, I only completed interviews with 75 households, including 65 Muslim households, and 10 Christian households. See Chapter II for more details.

primary task was to take care of the aging parents.[90] In other examples, the parents are the head of the household. The second type is of a household family with three generations where the parents do not own their own land or have income so that they depend on the other members of the family who stay and take care of them.[91] The third type is of a nuclear family that lives independently, owning their own house and land. They inherited their property from their parents or added to it by their own work.[92] The fourth type is of a nuclear family that lives by itself, but does not own its own land. In this type the family depends on wage labour or various other sources of income. This fourth type includes several subtypes, for example, they may be young, middle aged or old.[93] They may have

[90] This tradition comes from the practice that the youngest child is married last. If the youngest is a daughter, the last son before her has the right to stay at the parent's house. However if the family has only a single daughter, the right of inheritance goes to her. This type of household model doesn't consider owning the house as the target because the ownership of the house remains with the parents. The obligation to take care of the parents is not a free choice. The income from the management of the plantation is divided between the parents and the child who takes care of them. However, after the parents die, the property will be divided equally between the children. In this example, the family income doesn't only depend on *raki*, but also on a labourer's salary from PT GAI, the Banana Company. Copra from the *raki* is produced four times a year. Cash and credit are used to pay for everyday expenses of the family members. Family households that include inhabitants from three generations are not only found in the families of youngest sons who stays with the parents, but also are found among unmarried children and married daughters with their non-Ngidiho husbands. The three-generations of *Oom* Din's family is an example of this case. During my stay *Oom* Din's two sons are not yet married, so they are not expected to contribute to the everyday expenses of the family.

[91] In this type, housing is not a problem. The parents own their own house but have no income. In several cases, families renovated their homes after selling their plantations to the Banana Company. However neither the parents nor their children own any land besides their house. Aged parents stay at home and take care of the small grandchildren while other family members work as labourers at the Banana Company. The children of the landless parents have a variety of jobs to make a living, including fishing, cleaning other people's plantations, labouring at the Banana Company or making snacks to sell in the village. With jobs at the Banana Company, they can still be trusted for credit from the cooperative store in the village. They share their incomes with their parents.

[92] This nuclear household has mature plans for their family life. They work hard to achieve their goals. Their first target is to get land for planting coconuts. Achieving this plan can be done through working as labourers at the Banana Company or making lump sugar. Their house is very simple, but when they have money from their work they gradually work on renovating their house. I didn't find the model of a nuclear family, which included only parents who were old and still owned their own *raki* but lived alone. Old parents who own *raki* always invite one of their married sons to stay with them. If the son is sick and can't work with their *raki*, the parents can hire other people to manage their plantation. They receive credit from the cooperative store to cover their basic needs if they don't have cash.

[93] Housing is not a problem for them, but they are concerned about their lack of health services and the difficulties of old age. There were several old couples without *raki*, who got sick without having families to take care of them. After selling their *raki*, their help comes from their married children. However the stores in the village will not give them credit to buy their basic needs without cash because they have no regular income. I found that parents fear living alone as a nuclear family without having a son to take care of them. Several families didn't ask for bride wealth but instead asked for a grandson to come and live with them. Even though they had a daughter but they could not ask their daughter to take care of them because she has responsibilities to the family of her husband. However if the daughter is a single child and gets married to a man who has several brothers, then there is a possibility that the daughter and her family would want to stay at her parent's house because all the property of her parents would go to them. In contrast, the property of the husband's family would have to be divided among all the children of the parents.

never owned land, or formerly owned land which they sold to PT GAI, the Banana Company.[94] These types suggest that changes in household characteristics in Ngidiho are not caused by changes in the physical building of houses but rather are stimulated by the development of a variety of work options available in the society.

According to Matsuzawa, in the past each extended family stayed together in a "great house" (*bangsaha*) in which each nuclear family had separate rooms but shared a kitchen at the back of the house (Matsuzawa: 1980). Although the *bangsaha* are now extinct, during my research, families with three generations living together were still common. They pool their money together for buying the necessities of the family. Different members contribute what they can. For example, for the first half of every month, when money is relatively abundant in the village from the monthly salaries of the Banana Company, the sisters Sarnawiah and Sahadiah made snacks to sell in front of *Oom* Din's house. The snacks sell quickly during the first half of the month. The profit from the sale of snacks contributes to the necessities of the household including necessities of their nuclear families. Each nuclear family pays for secondary needs like buying clothes, education and other things.

The Galela people support their young people in several ways. If the son-in-law comes from inside the village, the daughter-in-law will move directly to her parent-in-law's house. However, if the groom comes from outside the village and the bride is from inside the village, the groom is invited to stay at the bride's parents' house, assuming that the groom has already paid substantial marriage costs, including bride wealth and *fongu*. Then both the bride and groom's family will help them build their house. If not, the husband will have to help his father-in-law.

Traditionally, a daughter after getting married becomes a part of her husband's family and only owns the property that she and her husband can produce from their work together. A son can't depend on the property of the parents because it has to be divided equally. The parents in Galela don't often help their married sons because the son has already received lots of help from the family at the time of his marriage. The groom's family has to pay a lot to the bride's family. However the son always has a special position in Ngidiho society. Besides inheriting his parent's house, because he takes care of them, the elder son is also respected. He has the right to arrange the distribution of his parent's property to his siblings. Sometimes, if the parents don't arrange clearly for the equal division of their property, the sons will take more than the daughters. However the norm in the present life of Ngidiho is to distribute the parent's property equally among all the children.

[94] They may work at a variety of jobs, for example working at the Banana Company, but also taking time off from working at the company to do other work like fishing or labouring on other people's plantation. Sometimes they are invited to play traditional music at marriage parties. They are not tied to a particular job. They might work for a while as labourers at the Banana Company and then go off to Irian to search for eaglewood which is the main ingredient to make incense. Housing is not a problem for them as long as it is safe. Those who work at the Banana Company or in the harbour, have cash. However those who work in Irian don't have a permanent income. Only husbands go to Irian. Sometimes, after staying six months to a year, they return home with no money. Wives who don't have raki bear a heavy load. Even if they work at several jobs, sometime they are not trusted for credit by the consumer store.

The background of Sahadiah's contribution to *Oom* Din's household is directly connected with her marriage process. *Oom* Din as the father of the bride, didn't request the customary bride wealth that would normally be used to put on a big party. Instead the groom's family only paid the *fongu* and the party was kept simple. *Oom* Din repaid the *fongu* with small gifts to the groom's family, thus preserving the basic principle of equal exchange. However since the bride wealth had not been paid, the groom was still indebted to *Oom* Din (the bride's family). As a result, the bride and groom had to live with *Oom* Din and continue to contribute to the expenses and work of the bride's family household. The entire family ate meals cooked by *mama* Iana and the two daughters, Sarnawiah and Sahadiah.

Categorization of the household types described above shows not only the material conditions that tie family members to each other, but also shows how they articulate the relationships and ensure that each member benefits from their position in the family. When I first stayed with *Oom* Din, both of his daughters and their families lived together in one household. In October 1999, the elder daughter, Sahadiah with her family, moved to their own house right next to the house of *Oom* Din. They moved out from Oom Din's house, after Sahadiah's husband, who is a wood worker helped to build his parent in law's house. However, almost everyday, her children came to their grandparent's house. If *mama* Iana cooked a delicious meal she would send a portion of the meal to her daughter's family next door. In return, Sahadiah gave some of the snacks from her business to her parents. The exchange of food is common among friends within the village. I was usually offered food when I wandered from house to house during my stay in the village. The Galela people call this practice *hike de dota***,** which means exchange of cooked meals.

Picture 18: As she prepares to move out from her parent's house, Sahadiah shows her kitchen supplies to her father.

3.1.2.2. Negotiation in the Galela's Marriage.

The Galela practice an exogamous marriage pattern that is marriage between people from different clan or kin-networks.[95] This pattern means that a family who gives their daughter must be different from the family that receives a wife. This pattern does not require that if a man from family A gives his sister to family B he is then entitled in return to receive his wife from family B. Sometimes there is marriage between cousins, however if this marriage happens, especially from the same male line (*doroa*), an *asal madola* ritual to disconnect the genealogical relationship, has to be carried out. The ceremony is assumed to break the blood relationship between the future husband and wife.

Marriage is carried out in several stages. First, the groom's family approaches the bride's family and gives them *kabilano*, the traditional little plaited box of betel nut. At this time, the two families serve each other betel and areca nut to chew. The groom's family begins the negotiations concerning the amount of *fongu* that must be paid. *Fongu* must be paid to the bride's family to reimburse them for their loss. When agreement is reached on the allocation of *fongu*, it signifies that there is now an agreement of marriage between the two families. In the Galela language, the word *fongu* is a technical marriage term that is only used in the formal process of negotiating marriage between two families. The full statement is *o kea moi in fongu* that means "how much is the loss of the bride worth". After the *fongu* is determined, they discuss the date of the wedding ceremony.

In this book I use the word *fongu* with two meanings, firstly, the loss of the value of the bride and secondly, the cost of the wedding party. This understanding concurs with the explanation of an *adat* leader in Galela, *Oom* David Tunepe. Due to its connection with many ritual practices in the marriage process *fongu* has deeper meanings than just the cost of the wedding party. The loss referred to by the term *fongu* may have many referents, including the loss of their daughter's presence in the family, the loss of her labour, the loss of her virginity and the loss of all her offspring. *Fongu* is given in exchange for the bride's reproductive capability and is understood as *o tiwi ma ngango* that means "the living money". In contrast, the term "bride wealth" (*mas kawin*) was unknown in the past and shows the influence of Islam in the Galelan marriage rituals. The bride wealth is usually a fixed amount of money, for example Rp. 60,000, and is not subject to the same intense negotiations that surround the *fongu*.[96]

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[95] People within the same group are not permitted to marry each other. Platenkamp categorizes the marriage process in Galela and Tobelo as between the families of the "Wife Giver"=WG and the "Wife Taker"=WT. While I am indebted to Platenkamp for his careful research, I prefer to modify his terminology and use the less offensive terms of "Wife's Family"=WF and "Husband's Family"=HF. According to Roger M. Keesing this type is categorized as a symmetrical alliance (Keesing: 1981, 264). This means in the kinship terminology of Galela there is no unilineal principle, which describes only one line of descent from the father or mother's line, but rather a bilateral principle on which extended partnerships between families are built (Matsuzawa: 1980, 366).

[96] According to Platenkamp, there is no term for bride wealth in the traditional marriage rituals, either in Tobelo or Galela (Platenkamp: 1988, 202). The people of Tobelo use the word *huba* for the term by which there is an amount of money from the HF to be paid to the WF (Platenkamp:

The agreement between the two families is called *demo pomakosone* (Galelan) or *putus suara* (Indonesian for "unified voice"). At this stage, the bride's kin (*o bolu moi*) will bring up any wrong actions, which they feel the groom's kin (*o bolu moi*) has shown in the interaction with them. The groom's family has to acknowledge their wrong attitude, apologize and pay a fine to cover any humiliation the bride's kin-family may have ever suffered as a result. The payment of this fine is called *biomomade.*

If the groom's family cancels the marriage, he has to pay a fine to the bride's family. Conversely, if the bride's family withdraws they will have to pay a fine. If the bride's family initiates a divorce after the wedding they have to pay a fine that is double the cost of the *fongu* that they received from the groom's family. However if the groom decides to get divorced, *fongu* is considered "burnt" and the groom's family has to pay a *biomomade* fine to cover the humiliation to the bride's family.

There are several general fines that have to be paid by the groom's family before the wedding happens. These fines or penalties are connected with stories of the settlement of conflicts in the distant past. The *sahe ma bobangu* fine must be paid if a marriage couple unites two villages. For example, the groom from another village who marries a bride from Ngidiho has to pay this fine to the village of Ngidiho. The *ciko ma bobangu* fine[97] must be paid if the marriage occurs between

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1988, 202, 271). Ajawaila uses the word *rugi* (loss) to translate the Galela word *suba*, which parallels with the same meaning in Tobelo (Ajawaila: 1996, 202). However the word *suba* means the action of respecting and bowing presented by the groom line (*doroa*) to the parent of *modoka* (the daughter in law). Furthermore the word to explain the loss is taken from the Galela word *fongu*. In the practice of marriage rituals among the Christians, they use the term *fongu* and *mas kawin* (bride wealth). According to the early practice, before the influences of the universal religions, the word *fongu* referred to the loss that had to be paid by the groom's family (HF) to the bride's family (WF) in Galela. Actually, the payment of *fongu* doesn't go for the bride cost but for the offspring (*keturunan*). Because of this, *huba, suba* or *fongu* is understood as "living money"(see Platenkamp: 1988, 202). HF pays this money to WF as an exchange for the bride's reproductive capacity. However according to Platenkamp the payment of living money cannot be seen as the sign of a process of negotiation because the relationships between the WF and the HF is not one of seller and buyer (Platenkamp: 1988, 202). I don't agree with this argument, which is disproved by my narration of *the wedding party.* I agree that the marriage rituals do not imply the sale of the bride, but that does not mean that it is not a process of negotiation, including the negotiation of *fongu* and the bride wealth. The process of negotiation doesn't only occur in relationships between sellers and buyers but is a part of all political relationships.

[97] The background of this fine is historical. In the middle of the 16th century, the Sultan of Ternate, Sultan Baabullah had a war against Portugal. He received help from the people of Tobelo to drive out Portugal from the small local kingdom, Morotia in Mamuya, which was located between the border of Galela and Tobelo. As a reward, he gave the Tobeloans land that was taken from the territory of Galela. The Sultan had the authority to do so because he claimed the whole of Halmahera as his territory. However the people of Galela enshrined their grievance over the loss of their land, in their rules for the marriage ritual, which were subsequently legalised by both sides. Every groom or bride who is from Tobelo and wants to marry a Galelan has to pay a fine because of something that happened over 500 years ago! In those days, the territory of Galela stretched from Gorua to Luari on Halmahera Island and to the small island of Tolunua, whose people still speak Galela up to present time.

two people from different districts, especially from Galela and Tobelo.[98] If the groom is from Tobelo, he has to pay a fine to the bride's family from Galela. On the other hand, if the bride is from Tobelo, the bride's family has to pay the *cikomabobangu* fine to the district of Galela. A *merah putih* (red white) fine has to be paid by either a groom or bride who is from Tobelo.[99]

After the *demo pomakosone* (unified voice) ritual, the groom and bride's families carry out an exchange ceremony. In the past the exchange ceremony was conducted separately. However when I was in Ngidiho, the ceremony was carried out at the same time as the ritual *demo pomakosone*. The groom's family usually makes preparations beforehand at a house in the bride's village that is owned by someone in their kin-network. The groom's family stores their exchange gifts, such as sago[100] and dry fish, in this house. After the *demo pomakosone* ritual they fetch the gifts and return to the bride's family house with their goods for exchange. Meanwhile the bride's family has already prepared cooked food such as *wajik* and *halua* to be offered to the groom's family. The grooms' family must accept the gifts and return gifts of money of similar value to the gifts of cooked food. Later, the bride's family will also give return gifts to cover the value of the sago and dried fish that they received from the groom's family.

[98] In Chapter VII, I will explain how the *cikomabobangu* fine was connected with the *tona ma langi* treaty. This ancient treaty was reformulated and used for making peace in the North Moluccas after the mass violence of 1999-2000.

[99] This fine was justified with reference to an historical event in 1949 when an Indonesian troop of soldiers was created in Galela. Indonesia declared its independence on 17 August 1945, however the Netherlands continued to try to regain its colony that led to several years of revolutionary warfare. In the North Moluccas, Galela was chosen as the centre for defending Indonesian sovereignty. Former Japanese soldiers (*Heiho*) who had fled from Java, formed up with the Galela people as Indonesian troops in Ngidiho. This troop was named *pasukan merah putih* (the red and white troops), after the colour of the Indonesian flag. These troops carried the Indonesian flag from Galela into Tobelo, where they were humiliated by the townspeople who were Christians, still loyal to the Netherlands. Ever since that event the Galelans have been paying back the humiliation to the Tobeloans through their marriage rituals.

[100] In the past there was an obligation to give sago powder, but this tradition has now been adjusted so that the groom's family only brings cooked sago.


Pictures 19-20: The exchange gifts are set up on the table during the dinner at the groom's house;
The night before the wedding party.

They deliver these return gifts after the groom's family prepares a dinner for the bride's family when they come the groom's house to receive the *fongu* and the bride wealth. About a week before the wedding party is scheduled to take place, the groom's family prepare a *lama* that is a long table to serve dinner to the bride family. After the delivery of *fongu* from the groom's family to the bride's family, the bride's family has to return with rice (*o tamo*), cooked rice (*tamo oko*), cooked vegetables (*o gaahu*), *halua*, *wajik*, household equipment and plaited mats (*jomoto*).[101] Then the two families serve each other with food (*dadana*). The old

[101] The requirement of rice as one of the items of exchange in marriage and death rituals aims to maintain balance. In the pre-rice era before the 16th century, the groom's family had to pay the *fongu* without expecting anything in return. The groom's family gave the bride sago, fish and local liquor (*saguer*) as the products of their everyday work. However after the introduction of rice agriculture, the men worked outside their village. In the process of marriage, the two parties exchanged the products that represent their respective work. The men came bringing money, white clothes for his future mother-in-law, and a few Chinese, porcelain plates. In the tradition of Tobelo, as reported by Platenkamp, the groom family gives a set of swords to the bride's family as gifts. Platenkamp suggests that the deliverance of the weapons of war as gifts to the bride's family was a sign of the pride and courage of the groom's family (Platenkamp: 1988, 198). However Platenkamp's further interpretation that the deliverance of the war weapons to the bride's family by the groom's mother is to redeem a death or insult that may have happened before in the woman's family and be blamed on the grooms family seems rather convoluted and speculative. It seems simpler to just assume that the set of swords are gifts representing the groom's manliness and his heritage as a sea pirate or warrior. In the same way the bride brings the tools and products of her work. Perhaps Platenkamp should consider the historical factors that influenced the formation of this ritual, such as the historical involvement of Galela and Tobelo men in sea-piracy during the 17th – 19th centuries. Perhaps the mother of the groom delivered the swords to the bride's family, not to pay for an imagined death or insult to the bride's family, but as an offering to free her son from the accusation of murder that adhered to their ancestor's profession as the sea pirates. In any case, by giving the swords to the WF, the power of the weapons is now in their hands and the son cannot touch it. In the framework of power, the exchange between the bride and the groom's families seems in a position of balance, especially given the high value of the rice which was offered by the WF. However in reality, ritual exchanges are seldom in perfect balance. Imbalance is inevitable when the value of gifts for exchange experience inflation or deflation.

people from the both sides serve each other by feeding each other directly into their partner's mouths.

There are three ways in which a Galela family can pay off the *fongu* and bride wealth if the groom is unable to pay at the beginning of the marriage. First, a grandchild may be formally given to the bride's family as an exchange for the inability of the child's father to pay the *fongu* and bride wealth. Secondly, a son in law has to stay with the bride's family while helping them with the household work to pay off the obligation of the exchange rituals. Thirdly, if the groom's family cannot pay but the bride has already moved in to stay with them, the bride's family can take their daughter back. This means that the new marriage couple will face divorce.

There is one other way in which Galela families remove the *fongu* obligation. The bride's family can negotiate the elimination of their obligation to provide a big marriage party in exchange for giving up their right to receive *fongu*. If this is the choice of the bride's family it means that they don't have to respond by giving gifts to the groom's family to pay back the value of the party costs paid by the groom's family. If the bride's family requests the party costs (*fongu*), they are obligated to give traditional gifts in return, for example, intricately hand-woven mats (*jomoto*),[102] cooked rice (*tamo oko*),[103] cooked vegetable (*o gaahu*), the kitchen equipment and the place for betel nut (*kabilano*). These gifts should be of similar value to the *fongu*. The two daughters of *Oom* Din were married using this model of negotiation. They didn't ask for *fongu* so they didn't have to give in return.

The elimination of *fongu* doesn't mean the removal of other requirements such as bride wealth (*mas kawin*). For Muslims in Ngidiho, the bride wealth is a validation for a Muslim marriage. Muslim families give the bride wealth directly to the bride at the time of wedding ceremony (*akhad nikah*). The elimination of bride wealth causes a heavy punishment. The husband of Sarnawiah, the daughter of *Oom* Din who is a Bugis from Southern Sulawesi, was not permitted to stay in this own house because he didn't pay the bride wealth.[104] There are no exceptions made for a man, whether from outside or inside the village, for not paying bride wealth to the bride family, since this sum signifies the legitimacy of the marriage.

[102] Hand woven mats take many months to make and were very valuable in the life of the Galela in 1999.

[103] According to Platenkamp, the ritual language of the Galela and Tobelo people names rice as a sign of fertility that symbolizes the bride who gives birth (Platenkamp: 1988, 213). However rice is also a highly valuable commodity, which benefits the groom's family. Giving raw rice as an exchange gift means the groom's family can use it as new seeds for producing a new crop (Visser: 1989).

[104] *Oom* Din says that his son in law is an orphan. Andi came to Ngidiho to work at the Banana Company and had nothing to offer when he decided to marry to Sarnawiah, the daughter of *Oom* Din. In February 2002, I revisited the village and found out that Andi and his family had already moved to a different house. They moved out of *Oom* Din's house because the house was burned down in the violence and also because *Oom* Din's other son, Kibu, was now married and lives with his wife in *Oom* Din's new house.

The bride wealth is paid at the time of the Muslim marriage vow (*akhad nikah*). The cost of bride wealth in 1999 was Rp. 60,000.[105]

The modification of traditional practices that were carried out by *Oom* Din were possible because of his capability to interpret a new meaning of the practices in a new situation.[106] Changes in material conditions contributed to the process of reinterpretation. Ecological and economic change influenced the practices. For example, the natural materials needed for making some of the traditional gifts are becoming more and more rare and expensive in Ngidiho and Galela in general. The bride's family minimized their obligation to make labour intensive gifts by eliminating the obligation of the groom family to pay *fongu*.

Platenkamp argues that the marriage exchange rituals of the Galela free them from debts and obligations by maintaining a balance (Platenkamp: 1988, 196). I feel that this understanding is overly individualistic. Why? When two families are tied together through the marriage of their children, the exchange practices are an obligation that they cannot avoid. The two parties are tied together, within the terms of kin and affinal relationships, as the *modoka* line and *doroa* line.[107] This relationship has a deep meaning that includes obligations that will be carried down to further generations. Gift exchange does not remove obligation but rather builds relationships of ongoing responsibility. Once a party refuses to give, they also refuse to receive the exchange gifts of the other party. As a result they refuse the obligations of brother and sisterhood that are created through the marriage rituals (cf. Mauss: 1954, 11ff).[108]

Affinal exchange relationships can be diagrammed as follows:

1. Patterns of exchange in the marriage process carried out by the wife's family (WF) and the husband's family (HF):

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[105] Malay and Arab culture that spread along with Islam influenced the tradition of bride wealth. In Galela, *mas kawin* (bride wealth) is practiced by both Muslims and Christians.

[106] The party cost depends on the request of the bride's family. During my stay in Ngidiho there were several families who modified the marriage ritual practices. Sometimes the families simplify the marriage rituals based on the economic capabilities of both parties. Another reason was the respective statuses of the bride and the groom. In practice the Christian community tolerates engaged couples who live together before marriage, although it is forbidden by church teaching. Unmarried couples that live together are punished for violating Christian morality. Both the couple and their four parents are forbidden from attending Holy Communion at the church. However, after their formal marriage by the Church and state they are restored again to full participation in the church. In the Muslim community, there is no tolerance for couples living together before formal marriage because of their stricter understanding of law and sin.

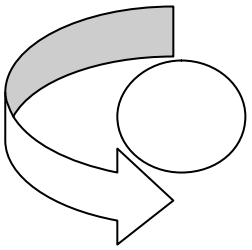
[107] (Matsuzawa: 1980, 364-365; cf. Barraud: 1994, 104)

[108] I don't agree with Platenkamp who says that the deliverance of *huba* and the swords from the HF to the WF shows the subordination and lower rank of the WF towards the position of HF (Platenkamp: 1988, 207). When discussing the exchange of rice, Platenkamp assumes that this practice shows the deliverance of gifts from a lower giver to a superior receiver that emphasizes the subordinate position of the WF (Platenkamp: 1988, 193). Platenkamp's hypothesis cannot be proved because the WF is also careful to ask *fongu* that will be of similar value to the gifts that they will return to the HF. The same reciprocal obligations are also observed in marriage rituals between a bride from Ngidiho and a groom from outside the village. When *fongu* is requested, there is an obligation to return gifts of similar value.

The bride family (WF) The groom family (HF)

Chart 2: Exchange Mechanisms in the affinity network

I and III = HF



II = *WF*

I. HF gives bride wealth and *fongu*

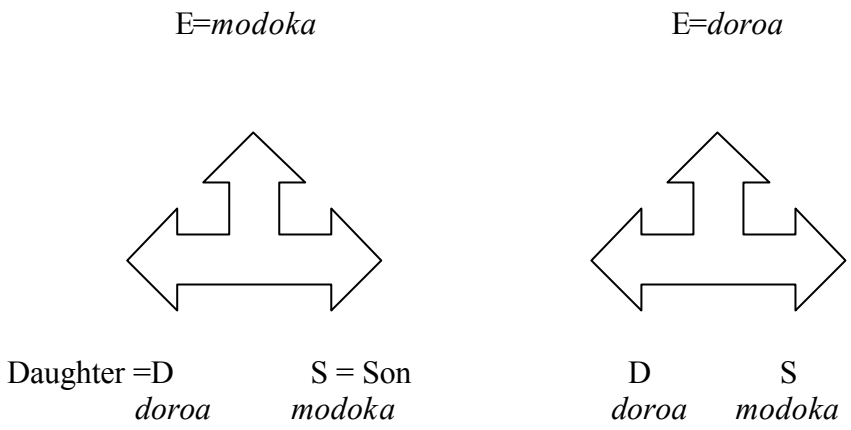
II. WF returns with *Sosoka*, which is a package of gifts to the groom family namely:

1. *Yomuto* (several plaited mats)
2. *Tamo oko* (cooked rice) and *o gauhu* (cooked vegetables)
3. *Poroco* or *palaudi* (a full basket filling with raw rice= *o tamo*)
4. *Sosiru* (a flat basket to winnow rice)
5. *Tate, sesasa, sosolota* (several kind for clamping wood to make fire)
6. *Kabilano* (the place for betel nut).

III. HF returns with sago, *damaha* (dry plaited fish), and *saguer* (local liquor).

2. The position of Ego (E) in the affinalship bond is tied by the groom's line (*doroa*) and the bride line (*modoka*). For example, a female Ego is *modoka* from the husband family (HF). Thus if the father of her husband died, she has to give exchange gifts from the *modoka* line to the family of HF. However, if a child of the female Ego gets married, the exchange gifts that she receives coming from both the *doroa* and the *modoka line*. The *doroa* is added in the family tree of the female Ego because she receives a son in law into her affinalship. The *modoka* line is added in the family network of the female Ego because she receives a daughter in law as her family member. This same principle is applied to the male Ego (father) who accepts the *doroa* from his wife family (WF). From the marriage of his son he receives a daughter-in-law who gives him the *modoka* line. Through the marriage of his daughter he receives a son-in-law who gives him the *doroa* line.

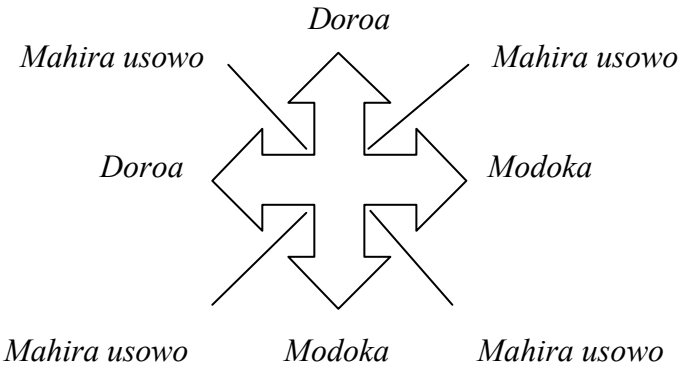
Chart 3: Family Lines



3. Patterns of exchange for giving (*bilangngu*) and responding (*mafanggali*) in the marriage and death rituals of a family tree (*shema*) of *doroa* (male) and *modoka* (female) lines can be drawn as follows:

Groom's party (*doroa*)	*Bride's party* (*modoka*)
Comes with sago, fish and local liquor	Comes with *wajik, halua*, sugar and *cucur*
Returns home with *wajik, halua*, sugar, *cucur*	Returns home with sago, fish and local liquor

Chart 4: Pattern of Exchanges



Mahira usowo are people who don't have an affinity relationship through marriage. A *mahira usowo* cannot bring the exchange gifts that are required for the line of *modoka* or *doroa*. If a *mahira usowo* brings gifts required by an affinity obligation, the family who receives the exchange gifts will laugh at him/her. However a *mahira usowo* is involved in the party by bringing rice or other food to

the family without expecting to bring anything home in exchange. A *mahira usowo* will be repaid when she/he has a party and the family he/she has helped will return the favour by bringing rice.

3.1.2.2.1. Supporting the Kin and Affinity Family through Exchange

One morning in October 1999, *Oom* Din was involved in a serious discussion with his elder son, Kibu who was 16 years old. As I listened, *Oom* Din was asking Kibu to participate in the harvest process of their coconut trees. Actually he just asked Kibu to be at the location of his plantation during the harvest. "I have given my plantation to be used by Suab Budiman who is my second brother-in-law, who was going to Mecca for his Hajj," *Oom* Din explained to me when I asked him why his plantation was lent to his second brother-in-law.

Part of the ritual exchange practiced by the people of Ngidiho is to loan or borrow coconut plantations. If members of a kin and affinity network have urgent needs, they can borrow a coconut plantation from one of their relatives for several harvests according to their agreement and needs. Going to Mecca is an expensive project for a member of a social class like the farmers of Ngidiho. In 1999, the total cost for the trip from Ngidiho to Mecca was about Rp. 30 millions. People, who make a vow to go on the Hajj have to collect their money for many years. "Without a sacred vow, a plan would always be blocked and never reached," *Oom* Din explained to me. He gave an example of a married couple who had already announced their sacred vow to go on the hajj but then experienced a major disaster.

According to *Oom* Din, their disaster came when the money donated by members of their kin-network for them to go on the hajj, was invested as financial capital to run their business. At the beginning, the marriage couple invested their money in buying a fishing boat and nets to catch fish off the island of Morotai. The prospect of the business was good, but the boat sank and unknown people stole the nets. After that, several businesses they tried had failed. Perhaps they were punished because they did not reserve the money donated for the sacred purpose of their vow.

Beside their personal money, a person who is going on the hajj, need supports from the members of the kin-network. The help they receive is not always in the form of money. A candidate for the hajj might get money from the village cooperative (*Koperasi Unit Desa* = KUD) or the store where they regularly sell their copra. Members of the kin and affinal network help the person generously by allowing them to use their coconut plantations. This help is given with the belief that in the future the receiver of help will return the favour by doing the same thing for the people who helped them in their time of need.

The community also builds mosques and churches using this same system. "As human beings we have a lot of obligations," Parmenas Budiman told me when I asked him how they manage their resources. In November 1999 there were

several activities that required support from him. His brother, Suab Budiman has planned to go on the hajj in February 2000. This meant that he had to give part of his plantation to be used by his elder brother, Suab. In November 1999, the Synod of GMIH had declared the district of Galela would become the host for the annual meeting of the church. The congregation of GMIH in Ngidiho was appointed as the host for the Synod meeting on Christian women before the annual meeting began. As a respectful member of the congregation and one of the elders of the church, Permenas Budiman had to contribute funds for supporting church activities. They had to complete the church building and build a kitchen for the parish house, which was going to be used for the women's meeting before the annual meeting. His main source of income to pay for all of these plans was from his coconut plantation (*raki*). His wife sold clothes on credit to the people, but most of their income came from their sale of copra.

3.1.2.2.2. Trust and Debt

Trust is a major factor in the social life of the people in Galela. The people judge whether or not someone can be trusted based on their work or their ownership of a coconut plantation (*raki*). With guarantees from their *raki* or their wages from regular work, a person can receive all they need and pay it back on a weekly, monthly or quarterly basis to the cooperative store (*KUD*). People are free to choose to whom they will sell their copra. However, once they are committed to selling or exchanging their copra for necessities at the store, they cannot easily shift to another store or KUD. The debt bond that occurs between a farmer and a store or KUD limits their freedom to build another trade network.[109]

In Ngidiho there is a saying, *a igo ma sopo gena tongohi uwa to KUD,* which means roughly, "I owe my dough to the company store!" (Literally, "The coconut harvest is not mine but is owned by KUD.") Not everyone is trusted with credit. Stores in Ngidiho, KUD or the individual stores at the district level in Tobelo only give new credit to an owner of a coconut plantation after the person has sold four

[109] Copra is sold through a series of "middlemen" First, the farmers bring their product to the village cooperative (KUD) or an individual stores. Secondly, the KUD or store sells the copra to the temporary collector at the district level (*Pengumpul Sementara*=PS). Next, the PS sells the copra to the Inter-Island Buyer (*Pedagang Antar Pulau=PAP*). Fourthly, the PAP sells to an Exporter in Surabaya. Farmers only relate to the PS, KUD or individual store. Farmers who produce at least one-ton of copra production per quarter can sell it directly to the PS without going through the KUD or the individual stores. These farmers can get a better selling price. Additionally the farmers may request a commission from the selling price given to KUD, or the individual stores as an incentive for the farmers to sell to them. The selling price of copra during my stay in Ngidiho was determined by the fluctuations of the market. If, in the exchange rate of the Indonesian Rupiah against the American Dollar, the rupiah weakened, the farmers were happy because the selling price of copra would increase, for example to Rp.2,500. per kg. Many farmers delayed sell their copra until the Rupiah went down against the Dollar. The KUD and the individual stores provided an incentive for the farmers to sell to them, by guaranteeing credit for their everyday necessities. In Ngidiho there was one KUD and three individual stores which provided credit to farmers.

harvests to the store, thus proving that they own a plantation that regularly produces copra.[110]

However occasionally the owners of a coconut plantation don't fulfil their promise to their permanent buyers. The people of Ngidiho say *igo siloda* which means the coconuts have fled with their owners. This happens when the owners of copra have debts, which they can't repay. If they sold the new copra to their permanent buyer there is a chance that they won't receive any cash since their profits are already eaten away by credit. Therefore they sell the copra to another buyer. If this happens, the two buyers have to solve the problem. The former buyer has to ask the new buyer to pay off the debts of the copra seller. The arrangement of a new trade network will come into effect later, after the new buyer pays off the loans of the former buyer. Then the seller starts a new obligation to sell his copra quarterly to the new buyer in order to pay of his transferring debts and any new debts that he makes after the first copra production is bought by the new buyer. If the three parties cannot reach an agreement, the case is taken to the police at the district level.

Individual stores and the KUD support the copra sellers as long as they sell their copra to their permanent buyers on a quarterly basis. The cycle of harvest is three times a year: April, August and December. For example, a farmer will harvest his coconuts in December and pay off his debts. He or she then makes new debts, which will be paid off at the next harvest. Debts given by the buyers to the sellers could be in the form of cash or of necessities such as sugar, rice, soap, cooking oil etc. If the sellers have other expenses like cement or credit for buying a motorcycle, the permanent buyers write a guaranteeing letter to the stores, which sell necessities to the sellers. The sellers take the letter to the stores and receive whatever they need. Usually, the permanent buyers agree to make an early payment to the store in question. The permanent buyers charge interest on the credit they extend to the farmers and deduct it from the price of the copra at the next harvest. The interest follows the market rate. Those who need funds for going on the hajj also use this system.

Many farmers no longer own their own plantations because they sold their land to PT GAI, the Banana Company. Landless farmers have difficulty building economic relationships outside the circle of their own village. People outside their village do not trust them if they have no plantation. Labourers who work for the Banana Company are tied to the labour KUD, which set up their labour union. Labourers can get cash or credit through their KUD labour union even if they don't own their own plantations. The labourer's debts are deducted directly from their paychecks by the Banana Company. Payment of debts among the labours directly is cut off through the company mechanism.

The economic mobilisation of those who work for the Banana Company is blocked at the village border. They don't have any products to sell except their

[110] Before they are approved for credit, a copra owner is referred to as a temporary client (seller). If they pass this phase it means there is a trust relationship between the buyer and seller and the owner of copra is called a permanent client.

labour, which is difficult to export. In the middle of the month, when their money runs out, people take on new debts at the stores of their village. The owners of the stores can refuse to give new credit when it has reason to doubt that person can pay back their debts. However if the villagers have a source of cash for their labour the stores make a good profit by charging interest. Some Ngidiho people who wanted to work in the sugar cane fields in Magiloi[111] needed money to pay for transportation. They asked for loans from the permanent stores in the village. The loans were granted but had to be repaid with interest everyday. Similarly, loans were granted to women who wanted to make and sell snacks in the afternoon and evening. After their snacks were sold, they went directly to the permanent stores to pay off their loans each day.

Picture 21: The owner of the store, wearing a sarong, stands at the front door, while many people gather on the terrace of his house and store.

Those who work as civil servants, such as teachers at the elementary school or officers in the district government offices of Galela, have a permanent salary and prefer to borrow money from the bank in the district of Tobelo. After taking out a loan, they invest it back in the same bank. Their loans are paid off automatically through governmental channels through deductions from their monthly salaries. This social class can also easily obtain credit from the stores in their village if they need it.

In my evaluation, the model of a modern village cooperative that developed the principles of KUD without paying attention to the cultural aspect of the exchange pattern among the people in Ngidiho, has enjoyed very limited success.[112] The members of the KUD are eligible to receive a subsidy from the local government District Office (*Kecamatan*), which supports the KUD with financial capital. The purpose of the subsidies is to stimulate the entrepreneurial capability of the members of the KUD. The members are expected to multiple their capital by developing a particular business. However, the village cooperative (KUD)

[111] Magiloi is a new agricultural field located on the Northern side of the River Tiabo. From Ngidiho to Magiloi it takes about an hour by public transportation to the last stop where people have to get off and continue walking on foot for about another hour and a half to Magiloa.
[112] See my interview with Poli Tolori in Ngidiho during October, 1999.

members do not build any bonds between the members or with the institution itself because there are no mechanisms of exchange to build obligation or commitment. The group is formed because of the availability of project funds relating to the empowering of small industries. Therefore members of the group don't see any need to extend their capital through an exchange process between them beyond their kinship and trust network. Most of the cash subsidies fail to help the villagers multiple their energy or income.

3.1.3. Neighbourhood Ties

It is easy to see how relationships in Ngidiho are built by observing the events of marriage and death. Besides the system of genealogical relationships, the Galela people also have ways to develop their relationships with their neighbours. In daily life, people often exchange vegetables and cook meals. For example, *Oom* Din's family and their neighbours, such as pak Hajj Tari frequently shared food. The daughter of pak Hajj Tari, a young widow sometime came to *Oom* Din house to ask for an ingredient she needed. As long as the ingredient was available in the house or garden, a neighbour was free to take it. However, the neighbours don't only ask, but also give when they are asked.

The sound of a beating drum (*bedug)* announces the death of someone in the village. Unlike in the case of a wedding party, the people do not need a verbal announcement in order to know that they are required to visit the grieving family. The grieving family has the right to receive voluntary help from people without any obligation to return the help. However, in reality, how much help the grieving family receives is dependent on the quality of their participation in the process of exchanging gifts and services within the village for their whole lives long and perhaps even longer.[113]

Before a wedding party takes place, someone will come from door to door to deliver an oral wedding invitation (*gogoro*). The official messenger speaks very quickly and briefly, announcing who are going to get married in the village. The announcement is usually delivered three days prior to the party.

In these two moments of life, without being asked by the family from the death event or the marriage event, people who hear the announcement will come and help to prepare for the activity. As a neighbour, the most important contribution is to offer labour (*leleani*) and rice (*o tamo*). Each person brings about one liter[114] of uncooked rice to two occasions of the family: the death rituals and the marriage rituals. A mother or a father can represent the family in providing donated labour. If the parents cannot make it, the children have to replace them. If the children cannot attend, then one of the members of the kin-network could represent them.

Someone who comes as a representative must mention to the head of the household receiving the help, whom he is representing. This information will be written down to determine future exchanges. Helping neighbours with labour,

[113] Exchange relationships in some cases are passed down from generation to generation.
[114] One litre is about one and half kg.

cash or material things is called *jojobo*. In the case of a big event like a wedding, the support of donated labour is insufficient to ensure the success of the activity. Long before the neighbours come to help, the extended kin-family and close family are already hard at work in preparation for the event.

The relationships between neighbours who work on each other's plantations are based on the assumption that work has economic value. Before the people of Galela accepted money as the medium of economic exchange, they already knew the meaning of an economic contract. Work in a plantation was valued according to the agreement of the two parties, the labour and the owner of the plantation. An informant who is known as the leader of *adat* for the village of Duma told me that in the 1970s the salary of a labourer who cleaned a coconut plantation at a rate of one hectare per day, was a plate of *ketupat,* which included twenty rice cakes and 10 dry fish. *Ketupat* is a rice cake cooked in coconut milk and baked in plaited coconut leaves in the shape of a cone. During the 1970s there were not many people who planted coconut trees in Galela. Several men would work together to clean a plantation. They worked, not according to a space-time wage, but depending on the entire contract for their labour. Usually, this labour could be finished within two or three days. This type of salary is called *ma ngatori sima.*[115] Besides receiving *ma ngotori sima*, they would also receive their lunch every day (*ma ngaino yaho oda*). In 1999, when I stayed in the village, the salary of a labourer who picked coconuts from the trees was Rp. 500 ($ 0,06 cents) per coconut palm tree. In a single day a man could harvest 15-20 trees for a total of about Rp. 10,000 per day. Along with the salary a labourer also received *ma ngaino yaho oda* (the major midday meal).

[115] *Ma ngatori sima* means to arrange a counter payment (*sima*).

**Pictures 22-24: Cooking voluntarily for the wedding;
Dancing to support the groom who goes to pick up his bride;
Cooking for the funeral.**

One day a Javanese man who was about 40 years old, complained to me because he knew I came from Java. He was married to a native of Ngidiho, the daughter of the former Village Head who had already died. He complained about his frustration with the Ngidiho people. He said that they were lazy. He had given many packages of cigarettes to several young men with the understanding that they would clean his coconut plantation. However he was disappointed that they didn't do it. I was surprised to hear his complaint and realized that he did not understand how the Ngidiho people build relationships of exchange. I suggested that he should tell them openly about what he wants them to do for him.[116] He should explain clearly how much he is willing to pay them. Perhaps the young men didn't understand that he intended the cigarettes as payment for them to clear his plantation, because he didn't explain it to them. Moreover, if the young men knew that the cigarettes would be their salary, they might not want to accept the

[116] One of the characteristics of a Javanese is to speak indirectly rather than directly (see Niels Mulder: 1983).

job because they could get more money with the standard public payment for labour in the village or at the Banana Company.

3.1.4. Taboos and Enemies

Each mature person in Ngidiho has to know their genealogy and the basic network of their kin and affinity group. Status awareness in kinship relates to the practices of taboos. *Saali* means rule that use other words to evade use of words that resemble in-law's name (cf. Visser: 1989, 106). An adult woman who has an affinal bond through marriage, must pay respect towards her father-in-law who paid the bride wealth (Matsuzawa: 1980, 365). Respectful attitudes and practices are required from both the daughter-in-law and the son-in-law. In their status as a daughter or son-in-law, they must show respect by never uttering the name of their parents-in-law. In return, the father-in-law is obligated to protect his daughter-in-law and maintain the purity of the woman's fertility as the right of his son. He is required to punish any other men who don't show respect for his *modoka*.[117] *Modoka* not only means daughter-in-law but also refers to the protection that she receives from the members of her husband's family. Before the Galela people converted to Islam and Christianity they believed that a *modoka* was directly protected by the ancestors of her husband's family (Platenkamp: 1988, 183).

When I stayed in Ngidiho, I was surprised to meet a Ngidiho man named Muhammad. Traditionally, it is forbidden to speak the name of your father-in-law. If so, how could this man's son or daughter-in-law perform the *sholat* (daily Muslim worship)? In Islamic prayer, the name of the prophet Muhammad SAW must be stated in the praying liturgy. With the tension of this question I asked the man how his daughter-in-law dealt with this dilemma. He replied that his daughter was permitted to utter the name of the Prophet during prayers. He explained that God's law regulates the use of the name of the prophet Muhammad SAW. This name is more important than the traditional Galelan taboo. However this example differed from the practice of Christians in Ngidiho. When a man whose father-in-law is named Luke comes to the name "Luke" while reading the Bible, he is not permitted to speak out the name because it would be disrespectful to his father-in-law. Therefore he has to find some circumlocution to avoid saying Luke when he reads the Bible. (cf. Visser: 1989, 106). A woman is also required to do the same thing.[118]

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[117] Respectful attitudes are expected from both the *modoka* and the *doroa*. The father-in-law has the right to receive respect from his son-in-law because he gave gifts in exchange for the *fongu* and bride wealth that were paid by the HF to the WF (cf. Matsuzawa: 1980, 357). Therefore a son-in-law is not permitted to speak the names of his Father or Mother-in-laws (Matsuzawa: 1980, 394).

[118] There are two meanings in the avoidance of names in Halmaheran culture that, according to Visser, are linked with the practices in Hawaiian cultures (Visser: 1989, 105). Visser reports that the taboo is applied in several layers of relationships. First is in the relationship between sisters and children. Second is in the relations between a family member (*o dowara*) of the opposite sex in relation to a man or a woman who are categorised as a husband of an elder sister of the Ego's husband (HZH) or an elder brother of Ego's wife (BWB) (*mu'duor*). For example, a male Ego has to relate in an indirect manner with the wife of the elder brother of his wife (WBW). He has to

People who don't show respect for the bonds and taboos of their kinship relations are ostracised and portrayed as the enemy of the entire community. In Ngidiho there is a law that forbids a marriage between partners who follow different religions. The marriage can be accepted by the Muslim community, only if the husband or wife who is a Christian converts to Islam. Conversely the marriage can only be accepted in the Christian community if the Muslim partner converts to Christianity. It is said that a fight will erupt in the village if a marriage between a Christian and a Muslim takes place. One of my informants was a Christian woman who became a single mother because her family could not approve of her marriage to a Muslim man from Ngidiho.

However occasionally a couple from different religions will get married secretly with one of the partners converting to become either Muslim or Christian. There are no strict regulations about this model, however I can list several cases of inter-religious marriage. One of the uncles of *mama* Iana, used to be a Muslim but became a Christian when he married a Christian woman from the same village in Ngidiho. That took place in 1957 before the marriage law of 1974 (UU number 1, 1974) and the regulation of 1975 (9/1975) which prohibits interreligious marriage and sharpens religious identity. In 1974, an elder son of the couples mentioned above, Suab Budiman married a Muslim woman from the same village and became a Muslim. Most of people in Ngidiho, including *Oom* Din, saw their marriage as fulfilling the model of exchange. While these marriages may be seen as aberrations influenced by the conditions of a particular context and time, mixed marriages are a continuing problem all over Indonesia. In Ngidiho most people avoid inter-religious marriages because of the risks they present to both of the religious communities in the village.

A Christian leader based in Tobelo whose family lives in Ngidiho told me the story about the beginning of his sister's marriage to a Muslim man from Ngidiho. Her family who is Christian did not approve of the marriage. The hostility between her and her family had continued for many years. However the hostility was not an open fight because the Muslim man was the head of village in Ngidiho. The woman was the fourth wife of the man. After her husband died, she remarried to a Muslim man from Ternate. The relationship between the women and her family improved. Her daughter from her first marriage often visits to eat at the house of her mother's parents in Ngidiho.

The level of hostility to a couple who come from different religious communities depends on the individual case. Some people who break the taboo may not be indigenous to Ngidiho. In that case it may be easier for them to recover their relationships within their families after the process of inter-marriage happens. A woman from a Tobelo-Chinese family, who were living in Ngidiho, married a Muslim man from Ngidiho. After she gave birth to her first son, the hostility between families was eased because the grandparents shared in the joy of their grandson's birth. The grandson was given to them in exchange for their daughter

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respect the wife of his brother (BW) because of the taboo connected with the concept of *modoka*, which protects married women from direct contact with men who are not their husbands.

who became a Muslim due to her marriage to a Muslim. In this case, it might be observed that the level of hostility was influenced by which party came from the dominant in-group in the community and what was their respective social status in the society.

Two examples illustrate how hostility can develop towards a particular person or group in Ngidiho. In the first example hostility is connected with breakdowns in the system of exchange. One day I was surprised to hear a comment from *Oom* Din about *Pak* Namsa whom I had just visited. He was known as an enemy of the people in the village. "Oh…that person! He is a dangerous man. I will ask the *Badan Sara* (the local Islamic Court) to punish him," *Oom* Din told me emotionally. He was in a hurry to finish his talk with me after he heard where I had been. I had just returned from the house of *Pak* Namsa, a forty-year-old man who was proud to tell me about how he built his own house and used his spare time to work as a labourer at the Banana Company. His main work was to take care of his coconut plantation. Namsa is the example of a head of household who has a nuclear family and knows how to reach his dreams with a careful calculation. "I want my elder daughter from my first wife to go to nursing school. I have worked very hard so that I can have extra money to give for her education. I am dedicated to supporting my children so that they can extend their knowledge at school. I also must pay for the expenses of my second wife and her children." Namsa shared his dreams with me. His first had wife died about six years ago.

My acquaintance with Namsa made me feel confused when I heard *Oom* Din's accusations against him. Why did *Oom* Din look so angry with him? "I heard he sold his dead cow to the people in Makete!" *Oom* Din sprayed out his accusation of Namsa to me. It was clear that Namsa must have made a big mistake. Eating or receiving money from the result of selling a dead animal is *haram* (forbidden). Islamic teaching requires that when an animal is butchered for the consumption of human beings, the butcher or *ulama* has to begin by saying the words of the *syahadat* (confession) that start with the word, *Bismillah rraham nirrahiim* which means in the name of God who is the All-Merciful Lord. Because of this, if there is a party in the village put on by someone from the Christian community, a Muslim leader is called to do the ritual killing of the cow.

Picture 25: A Muslim elder always prays before killing a cow that is going to be served for a wedding party in the village.

A week later I was invited to have lunch with a Christian family in Ngidiho after attending the church. I was surprised because the meal was luxurious. My host explained, "We put this meat in the fridge. We got it a week ago as a free and equal distribution to all the members of the church. The meat was from the cow of *Pak* Namsa, our neighbour in Ngidiho." This explanation surprised me. I was happy to get another clue to discuss with *Oom* Din.

The people of Ngidiho did not eat meat very often. Beef is an expensive item to be eaten only on special occasions like a wedding party or funeral. People consume more fish because it is easy to catch and it is cheap. Namsa who was accused by *Oom* Din didn't actually sell his dead cow to Makete, but rather called an elder from the Christian community in Ngidiho to take the cow. An unknown person had stabbed the cow. The Christian community was often called to receive a dead cow from the Muslim community if it died suddenly.

I had to wait for the right time to discuss this story with *Oom* Din. On Sunday night when we were circling the table for dinner, the situation was very good. I told the family about my Sunday afternoon activities with the Christian family. *Oom* Din and the entire family always go to their plantation on Sundays. It is the best time for the whole family to gather and help clean the plantation. *Oom* Din only works a half-day on Fridays. *Mama* Iana doesn't go to her garden on Fridays because she prepares a nice weekly dinner for the whole family to eat together after the Friday prayers (*sholat Jumat*). I often used Sundays to visit the people of Ngidiho at their plantations. "This afternoon, I had lunch at the Annu family's house. They served meat that was distributed from the cow of Namsa," I explained with a soft voice. I didn't want to put any pressure on *Oom* Din so that he would not feel offended. However he looks surprised to hear my account and his face seemed confused. Then I told the story about how the Christians in Ngidiho got the meat. *Oom* Din acknowledged that perhaps he received wrong information.

Later we had a serious discussion that made me think *Oom* Din's hostility to Namsa related to their different attitudes towards rituals of exchange. According to *Oom* Din, Namsa is a stingy person. He never appears in the social activities in Ngidiho. He's stingy in his donations to the development of the mosque. "His life is just for himself. Ibu, you can see for yourself whether he was at the wedding party of the Nurman's son. He wasn't, was he? People came from everywhere, while he, who is a neighbour didn't attend!" *Oom* Din asked me to remember whether Namsa was at the family party, which was the biggest party during my stay in Ngidiho. I couldn't remember seeing him during the three days of the wedding celebrations. "However perhaps he got sick or had other obstacles?" I tried to understand the problem from his side. "Oh… it's not true, he never wants to attend!" *Oom* Din grumbled. He explained about the time when Namsa built his house and not many people came to help him. Instead of having neighbours to help, he hired other people to work on his house.

Oom Din's story about Namsa suggests that according to the Ngidiho, anyone who refuses to participate in the exchange practices is assumed to be an enemy of

the community. Namsa's behaviour might appear evil to someone like *Oom* Din, who still lived within a traditional ethic of ritual exchange. However an alternate explanation may be that he was not evil, but rather was already operating within a different system of modern, economic rationality instead of the traditional ethic of exchange. Perhaps he neglected his exchange obligations, but Namsa exhibited a high degree of commitment to his own family, a concern for education and "progress" and a willingness to cross religious boundaries with his charity.[119]

The problem of giving is not only the problem of Namsa. *Oom* Din also complained to me about the carelessness of the Muslims in Ngidiho who did not want to participate in donations for building the mosque. *Oom* Din went so far as to conclude that perhaps this careless attitude was caused by the assumption that exchange between human beings and God would not bring visible results. After all, how could God repay the people for their donations to build the mosque? Perhaps their calculations mirrored the attitude in the Edda poem quoted by Marcel Mauss at the beginning of this chapter!

Pictures 26–27: Building a mosque and a pastor's house in Ngidiho.

In spite of his cynicism, *Oom* Din always gave to others and also to the mosque. He believed God would repay his charity. *Oom* Din's attitude was connected with his conviction that the fruit of his labours would come later, after the mosque was finished. Then he, and all those who always gave to the mosque, would be proud of its existence in Ngidiho. Everyone would acknowledge that Ngidiho had the biggest mosque in Galela.

A second example of conflict between traditional and modern values occurred in 1993, when the Banana Company began to operate in Galela and I was working in Tobelo. The agro business provided many trucks to carry labourers from their villages to the banana plantation to work. People came from villages in Tobelo, and all around Galela. Traditionally, in Galela and Tobelo no man, other than her husband, was allowed to touch a *modoka*. *Adat* law imposed a fine on anyone who

[119] This story is not meant to suggest that there is a simple evolution from a traditional to a modern rational ethic as assumed by a Weberian theory of social evolution. In Galela there is a dynamic tension between traditional cultural values, religious values and rational secular values. cf. Bernard Adeney-Risakotta's typology of the conflict between modernity, religion and the culture of the ancestors in, Kekuasaan, Agama dan Kekerasan di Indonesia (forthcoming).

dared to break the taboo. The amount of the fine depended on the seriousness of the violation. When the company entered the area and began to transport many people, packed into open trucks over rough roads, the society could no longer enforce a taboo against touching the opposite sex. Many *modoka* worked as female labourers along with the men. The trucks were full of male and female labourers and the company could not provide special trucks just for women (Risakotta: 1995a). At that time the Galelans generally viewed the Banana Company positively. The violation of adat taboos seemed like the inevitable price of progress in transportation and agriculture rather than the attack of an enemy.

Pictures 28-29: Labourers are taken to the factory with trucks.

However in 1999, the people of Galela already had a far more critical perspective on the Banana agro business. In February 1999, the people held a demonstration against the company, demanding additional compensation for the land they had been pressured into selling in the early 1990's. The demonstration was apparently successful because the company paid a substantial sum to the head of the farmers' group. Unfortunately he apparently manipulated the funds and did not distribute the money to the farmers who were meant to receive it.

Several elite workers of PT GAI, told me that since the reformation movement came to Galela in February 1999, several people who used to be farmers back in 1991 had threatened the company. They asked for various kinds of payments from the company and threatened to burn down the buildings if the company did not accept their demands. The community of Galela was changing its perception of the Banana Company, who no longer seemed like the source of modernity, prosperity and progress, but rather as an oppressor of the people. The next section will take up in detail the evolution of the land crisis in Galela.

3.2. Land and the Evolution of Traditions

This sub section will explain how material changes in society influenced changes in tradition. Land is the most important material factor that moulds the basic conceptions of the Galela people in articulating their knowledge and tradition.

Changes in land use led to the reformulation of tradition. I will focus especially on exchange practices in connection with the planting of rice and coconut palms.

3.2.1. Life begins from Land

Land is connected with the meaning of life for the Galela people. *O Galela ma tona ma dutu* means, "O Galela, my own land" (Ishige: 1980, 4; Ajawaila: 1996; Risakotta: 1995a, 34). Land is conceptualised as the people's home, the place where they belong.[120] Visser speaks of two kinds of kinship in Sahu, Halmahera, one through blood and the other through land (Visser: 1989). For the Galela and Tobelo people, the word for land (*ma tona*) is related to the word *ma dutu* that means "ownership, truely mine" (Hueting: 1908, 83). Their ownership of the land is their identity, that they received from their ancestors. Platenkamp records that the ancestors were the centre of the life of the Galela (Platenkamp: 1988, 21,79). To understand this concept, we have to consider the power expansion of the Ternate Sultanate. The concept of land, as understood by the Galela people is connected the expression *Jou ma dutu* ("the supreme lord"). This expression originally referred to the Sultan of Ternate.[121] The people believe they received their identity from the ancestors who gave them their inheritance of land that was granted to them by the Sultan of Ternate.[122]

3.2.2. Making Sacred Borders

In the middle of October 1999, towards the end of the monsoon season for planting rice according to the Galela calendar,[123] we went to the *doro* (garden) of *Oom* Din to plant rice. A great throng of people, including *Oom* Din's kin-family, several close neighbours, the Javanese couple, other friends of *Oom* Din, his household, and myself, gathered with great enthusiasm, covering his hectare of land in the southern part of the village, not far from PT GAI. The Javanese couple came to Halmahera as participants in a transmigration project in the district of

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[120] Platenkamp uses the term House with a capital letter H to distinguish the inhabitants of a household, who belong to the land, from a house as a physical structure (Platenkamp: 1988). The same approach, which differentiates House and house, is carried out by Simone Pauwels in her research about the meaning and the definition of house in the Eastern Indonesian (See Pauwels: 1994, 76-96).

[121] See (Schuurman: 1995).

[122] If someone dies, the people say, *O tona iboroka* that means 'the land mourns' because from the land appears life (Ajawaila: 1996, 236). The Galela people say *goho* that means "growth", "rise" or that "something is growing". *Goho* comes from the word *oho* that means life (see van Baarda: 1908, 89, 94; Ajawaila: 1996, 236; Risakotta: 1995a, 35). Therefore land is connected with life and also life comes from the land. All life that grows from the land may be used as gifts for the marriage and death rituals (Ajawaila: 1996, 3). It is a common phenomenon in Tobelo, Galela and Sahu to view the relations between human beings and land not only in terms of human ownership of the land, but also in terms of the land owning human beings (See Visser: 12, 123-140). In this book, Visser discusses the conception of de Coppet. cf. (Platenkamp: 1998).

[123] According to Yoshida the Galela people are influenced by several conceptions of time. The moon calendar shows the influence of Islam. The practice of making predictions according to the position of stars shows their influences from Austronesian cultures. They also inherited planting practices introduced by Dutch missionaries who introduced the Gregorian calendar to the Galela people (Platenkamp: 1988, 40-41).

West Gane.[124] They had lived in Ngidiho for about two months as labourers to dig a drainage system for the Banana Company. "Our life in West Gane was very difficult so we left the area and looked for another life," *Pak* Nardi explained to me the first time we met.

The night before, *mama* Iana, her two daughters and I cooked lots of food. We brought the food to the fields, riding on a cart with all the children. In Sahu's tradition, as reported by Visser, families who perform the rice ritual provide meals for those who participate in the first activities of planting and then again when they harvest the crops about four months after the rice is planted. Although the meals were simple, such as *ketupat*, *lodeh* vegetable sauce, and spicy fish sauce, the approximately twenty workers enjoyed the delicious food after planting rice for about two and a half hours.

Before we began to plant, *Oom* Din started with a prayer. "There is a special prerequisite that I have to perform," he explained to me. He held a tin plate full of raw rice in his left hand.[125] He dug seven holes and planted several seeds of rice in each one, while blessing the location with the following prayer:

> *Bismillah rraham nirrahiim. Allahuma solli ala sayidina Muhammad wa ala alie sayidina Muhammad. Ashadu Allah ila ha illa-la. Wa shadu ana Muhammad Rasul Allah.* ("In the name of God who is the All-Merciful Lord. Please God, give protection to the prophet Muhammad

[124] The district of West Gane is located in the Southern part of Halmahera Island. It is a part of the district of Central Halmahera. Rice planting in Halmahera is carried out on dry land. Usually the area for planting rice is cleared out from the forest or taken from around coconut plantations which do not yet have tall trees. The system depends on nature. This is why the Galela people are tied to an agricultural calendar. The planting system conducted by Javanese immigrants in West Kao and West Gane where *Pak* Nardi used to live, employed a wet rice system like in Java. The rice field had to be covered with water and use a drainage system. When I stayed in Ngidiho in 1999, there were less and less people who planted rice. According to *Oom* Din, in the past, the rice planting ceremony was the moment, when people gathered to celebrate the fertility of the land. I still remember in 1990, when I just arrived in Tobelo, there were several ministers from the GMIH church in Galela who complained that their society always celebrated long rice festivals after the harvest. However I didn't hear any complaint during my stay in 1999 because many people had sold their land to the Banana Company. There were no more rice ritual parties, in which people celebrated day and night for more than three days, as they did in Sahu (cf. Visser: 1989).

[125] Galelan language uses the term *o tamo* for rice. Indonesian language has three primary ways to refer to rice: raw rice (*beras*), cooked rice (*nasi*) and rice plants (*padi*). In Sahu, according to the research conducted by Visser, rice plants are called *Fatima*. *Fatima* is the name of the daughter of the prophet Muhammad. The society of Sahu who received rice plants with the name Fatima, portrayed the rice plants as revelation. Even though they embraced Christianity, the new crops introduced by the Sultan of Ternate and brought by Javanese traders, were viewed as a revelation by the local people. Perhaps the Sultan of Ternate considered the Sahu people as just a means of production because he needed rice. However the people knew how to adjust to a new agricultural technology without being subjected to the identity created by the Sultan. The people could distinguish between negotiating their own identity, creating their own practices, and coping with a dominant power from outside (see Visser: 1989). Before PT GAI bought lots of land from the people they planted four types of rice: *o tamo* (rice), *bobootene* (foxtail millet), *guwapo* (sorghum) and *rore* (Job's tears). See also (Sasaki: 1980, 66).

and his family. I witness that there is no God besides Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of God.")

His voice echoed loudly and filled the whole area of the field. *Oom* Din was blessing the land with his prayer.

The star is called *o pariama bau* (*bintang tujuh* or Pleiades) appears in the heavens during a particular season, twice a year.[126] When the star begins moving towards the West, it is the best time for people to begin sowing the rice seeds.[127] However during their growth, if the time of planting is not correct, the stalks of the rice plants may bend and break before they are filled with new seeds. Because of this, *Oom* Din was careful to observe the arrival of *o pariama*. The best time to plant is when the star stands straight above the head of an upright human being.[128]

Before *Oom* Din uttered his prayer, *Pak* Nardi, *Oom* Din's Javanese friend also prayed according to Javanese Muslim tradition.[129] He said a prayer before he began to make the seven holes to plant the seeds *(potudu).* The Galela connect the

[126] The stars appears firstly at the end of April towards the West and then again at the end of November on the East side (Platenkamp: 1988, 41).

[127] See van Fraassen: 1999, 86. For the Galela people, the most important stars are the Pleiades (*o pariama*) (see Yoshida: 1980, 101ff). The appearance of these stars relates with the presence of the ancestors in the village. Yoshida says that the understanding of *o pariama* shows a connection between Northern Halmahera and the Austronesian cultures (Yoshida: 1980). Platenkamp suggests that there is a scientific link between the presence of *o pariama* (Pleiades) with the fish season that appears from December to January, which is the time when the Galela people experience abundance with the harvest of both rice and fish (Platenkamp: 1988, 34-46). He also reports about the change of planting schedule in Galela introduced by the first Christian missionary, H. van Dijken (Platenkamp: 1988, 37-41). In the report of van Dijken, in 1871 the Galela people still planted rice between the months of April to May. The preparation for clearing out the rice fields was done from January-February. However, in 1888 van Dijken reported that the Galelan had already changed their schedule of rice cultivation. He says that the Galela planted rice in January and harvested in June. Van Dijken explained that the reason behind the change in planting schedule was determined by the sparse rainfall in Galela combined with high humidity. According to Platenkamp, the change of planting schedule influenced the their religious and social practices. The universe provides power and spirits that participate in every stage of their ritual practices. (Platenkamp: 1988, 32).

[128] The first appearance of *o pariama* is in April when the Galela people plant and the second presence is in November when the people harvest their crops. Therefore the change recorded by van Dijken suggests that the Galela people no longer planted rice at the time of *o pariama* (Platenkamp: 1988, 38). However the report of van Dijken may have been an aberration because the Muslims of Galela still considered the presence of *o pariama* in the process of planting rice as shown by *Oom* Din. Both before and after the Galela engaged with Islam, *o pariama* was still understood as the natural sign when people should plant rice. Practically, it is an easy sign for the Galela people to observe. The change of planting schedule introduced by the Christian missionaries, also influenced the practice of Muslims, who also planted twice a year. This practice was conducted widely among the Galela people especially before they sold their land to the Banana Company. Therefore the influence of agricultural innovation introduced by the Christian missionaries affected the agricultural practices of the Galela people, both Muslim and Christian.

[129] They met about a month after I came to stay with *Oom* Din and his family. *Oom* Din owns a small cabin at the *doro* where we came to plant the rice. *Oom* Din rented this cabin to the Javanese couple who were working on the drainage system at the Banana Company. *Oom* Din hired *Pak* Nardi to help in the planting and watch the new rice fields, protecting them from the intrusions of birds who would eat the new seeds.

star *o pariama bau* with the number seven since it appears in an area of the sky with seven stars. When I asked *Oom* Din why *Pak* Nardi prayed, he replied, "The more many people pray, the better it is for the growth of the rice plants". Similar to the Galela, the Javanese believe in choosing a right time to plant and offer a special prayer. *Pak* Nardi said the date *Oom* Din chose was correct, although the direction of spreading the rice seeds in the holes was different.

According to the Javanese, the blessing comes from the East. Therefore the spreading of rice should start from the East. However according to the Ngidiho people, the spreading of rice seeds has to be done from the direction of water. Because of this, the spread of the seeds begins from the West.[130] The river Tiabo lies close by, just to the West of Ngidiho and flows down to the ocean towards the East. The Galela believe that spreading the rice seeds from the West to the East will speed the growth and strength of the rice plant. This ritual logic makes sense because planting rice requires a lot of water. However unlike the irrigation system in Java, in Galela rice fields planted close to a river rely on absorbing enough water through the ground from the river.

Pak Nardi's prayer was as follows:

> *Bismillahi rrarham nirrahim. Niat inson ngarep nyebar biji tapi ditoleh kanan kiri buri ngarap ora opo-opo. Apa mane jama manungsa sedang satu kewang lelembuts ora ngene. Jadi saiki sandenen tisnawati ngarep tersebar nang tegal pekarangan atau tegal arara. Sandene tirna wati saiki ditempat nah apa sukma ya suka sukma langgeng langgeng kersane ngalah.*

This prayer begins with an Arabic greeting but the rest of the prayer is in Javanese. This differs slightly from the prayer of *Oom* Din, which is all in Arabic. *Pak* Nardi's Muslim prayer is influenced by indigenous Javanese religious

[130] Perhaps the Christian missionary didn't consider the closeness of the rice fields to the rivers and lakes so he proposed changing the planting season to the month of January when the volume of rainfall was usually high. However the Galelans also chose to plant and harvest their rice at the appearance of *o pariama* because they believed it signalled the arrival of their ancestors in their village. After the harvest of rice, the Galela people needed fish to accompany their meals. Harvesting in November was a good time because it was also the time when nature also provided abundant fish for them. When they harvested rice, they also harvested fish. We may conclude that the Galela changed their planting schedule so that it would conform to the Christian calendar. Before some of the Galela converted to Christianity, they planted rice once a year in April with the appearance of *o pariama*. Van Dijken changed the pattern, and ever since, the Galela plant twice a year. The first planting season is January with a harvest in May-June. They plant again in July, harvesting at the end of November and early December. These were important months for the new Christians at the end of the 19th century since December is the celebration of Christmas. This hypothesis is convincing, especially in light of Yoshida's question about why the Galela shortened their period before the harvest in the 20th Century. Yoshida finds inconsistency between the names of the month that the Galela created and the numbers used to refer to the growth of the rice, starting from the planting up to the harvest. Yoshida answers his own question by suggesting the possibility that the planting followed the pattern of the *o bobootene* (foxtail millet), which he believes was first introduced to the Galela. However, as observed by Platenkamp, Yoshida failed to pay attention to the influence of the missionaries in the change of planting schedules.

practices.[131] In contrast, *Oom* Din's prayer is directly rooted in the Qur'an. *Pak* Nardi's prayer is not taken from the Qur'an, but nevertheless locates the petitioner in the relation to Allah, his current activities and the protection he requests. The prayer may be translated:

> In the name of the All Merciful Lord, I intend to spread these rice seeds. Before doing so, I turn my head and look to the right and to the left in hopes that there is nothing harmful. If human beings believe in God, there are no bad spirits which can harm these plants. Now I will sow the rice seeds in the field. May these seeds, that I am placing in these holes, grow bigger, strong and resistant toward disaster.

Beside the differences in their prayers and the direction of planting, there are differences in the ways they dig the holes where the seeds are sown. The Galela stab a bamboo stick into the ground to make the holes at an angle. *Pak* Nardi and his wife made their holes upright. The Galela believe that growth and strength in their rice plants will be ensured they fulfil the requirements of the planting process. Nevertheless, *Oom* Din did not seem disappointed with the slight differences of concept and practice introduced by the Javanese couple. *Oom* Din could not understand the Javanese prayer said by *Pak* Nardi, however the beginning of his prayer in Arabic connected him with *Oom* Din. *Pak* Nardi also prayed to the same Allah who is the Ruler of heaven and earth. Both requested fertility for the new plants. It didn't matter whether or not *Pak* Nardi followed *Kejawen* (Javanese mysticism), since his religious beliefs were very close to *Oom* Din's.

A day later, rain poured down on Ngidiho. The field was covered with water. *Oom* Din saw the rain as a good omen. The pressure of the rainfall pushed the rice seeds into union with the soil. Secondly, birds could not eat the seeds because they had already melted into the earth. *Oom* Din hoped that we all, including my husband who was planning to come to Ngidiho, would enjoy the fresh rice at the Idul Fitri celebrations in January 2000. When I left Ngidiho the rice stalks were already 20 cm. high. Sadly the violence of 1999-2000 erupted before we could enjoy the rice harvest.

3.2.3. Rice: Reformulating Galelan Practices

Ten year after PT GAI began operating, rice fields have become a rare sight in Galela. Visser in her research in Sahu also reports that changes in the agricultural practices of Halmahera led to the marginalisation of rice cultivation (Visser: 1989). Government projects that encouraged the cultivation of chocolate (cacao)

[131] The Muslim *abangan* (peasants) in Java believe in evil spirits. The Javanese use the term *lelembuts* to refer to an evil spirit that is very dangerous. This spirit can take a form like Satan. It can cause human beings to become crazy and even bring death. The Javanese perform special rituals to guard against these spirits (Geertz: 1960, 19ff, 195). In the prayer of *Pak* Nardi, he uses the term *lelembuts*.

and coffee, also reduced the availability land for rice cultivation. Van Baarda wrote that when the chocolate and coffee he introduced failed, the Christians of Galela returned to rice cultivation (van Baarda: 1918). Rice came to the Galela through the Sultan of Ternate's connection with Arabic and Javanese traders (cf. Visser: 1989, 39).[132] Rice came to Galela via the kingdom of Gamkonora (or Limau Konora), an important kingdom in Halmahera before the 16th century. At the time, there were relations between the kingdom in Galela and other bigger kingdoms such as Ternate, Tidore, Jailolo and Bacan. Later, in the 19th century under Dutch colonial influence, the son of the Sultan of Tidore was appointed *Sangaji* in Galela.[133]

The rice harvesting ritual is the opportune moment to gather kinfolk from far and wide. In the past, people live separately, spread along the borders of the sago forest. The distance from one house to another was far. The rice rituals strengthened solidarity among kinfolk who lived far apart due to their need to gather food from the forest.[134] Each *bangsaha* lived separately within the territorial borders they claimed. But through the ritual of rice, they gathered once a year they strengthened their intimate kinship relations. The party after the harvest could last for about two months (Platenkamp: 1988). The head of the household was responsible for protecting kin ties that were threatened by geographical distance. However women, as symbolically connected with fertility and rice, did much to make the lively harvest festivals a success. Family differences were forgotten as the young people had a chance to meet each other.[135]

Rice played an important role in the marriage and death rituals of Galela because of its precious economic value. For the Moluccan people, eating rice was a status symbol (Boelens, van Fraassen, Straver: 2001, 58). Because of its preciousness, it became a major means of exchange. Visser quotes the note of Bosscher and van der Lith who reported that the Sultan of Ternate bought rice from his people at very low prices and resold it at very expensive prices (Visser: 1989). Rice was viewed as a sign of civilization. Sago is the primary source of food in the Moluccas in general, because the plant is commonly found throughout the

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[132] Foreign traders also brought their plants. The people traded crops and plants (see Boelens: 2001). Theoretically, it is unknown when exactly the people in the Moluccas began to consume rice. R. D. Hill states that in Java, rice cultivation already began since the colonialism of India, which began in the 2nd Century CE. Historical records show that rice and millet were already a major source of food in a kingdom in the valley of Berantas in East Java. By the end of the 13th Century, the Kingdom of Majapahit demanded that citizens present gifts of rice to the kingdom (see Hill: 1977, 21).

[133] See Chapter IV and also, Schuurman: 1995 and van Fraassen: 1999.

[134] The structure of a society dependent on sago consumption is characterised by their limited mobility outside the area of the sago forest. Each family builds its territory as large as the sago stocks they control. The period of their stay in a particular area depends on the availability of sago trees. When the stock of sago is finished, they have to find a new location which has not yet been claimed by someone else. Often they return to the old location of their territory as the new sago grows to maturity again. Yoshida reports that there is individual ownership of the sago trees (Yoshida: 1980, 115).

[135] A missionary reported, as quoted by Platenkamp, that the ritual of rice was lively and was greatly anticipated by the young people (Platenkamp: 1988; Visser: 1989).

Moluccas.[136] Since rice could be stored for a whole year in Galela, it was often used to pay the salary of labourers who worked in the coconut plantations (*raki*), or gardens (*doro*). In Sahu, payment with money was valued lower than payment with rice (Visser: 1989, 59).

Pictures 30-32: *Bobootene* (foxtail millet);
A new rice field;
Women pounding rice to separate it from its stalk.

Compared to sago, rice is a soft and gentle food that became the symbol of women. The traditional sago system which requires the hard labour of strong men, changed with the introduction of rice in the society. Rice could be planted and harvested by women. Rice cultivation changed the division of labour in the family and enhanced the economic role of women. The acceptance of rice as a staple food freed men from hard work within their villages. In pre-rice era, men prepared the stock of sago flour for the consumption of their family members. The heavy, rough and thorny sago trees require a man's strength to process them into flour. In contrast, the willowy, fragile rice plants seemed to invite a woman's touch. Women took over the rice cultivation and became responsible for ensuring the

[136] Barros, as quoted by Hill, reports that at the beginning of the 16th century rice had already spread to all parts of the 'Indonesian' archipelago. In the Moluccas, millet and rice were available in small quantities but the people still depended on sago as their staple food (Hill: 1977, 28-29).

stock of staple food for the family. This new role of women freed men from their obligation to work in the village. They then chose to work outside villages.[137]

Rice cultivation also changed the marriage and death rituals. Rice became a primary medium of ritual exchange, reflecting the new material conditions and the high economic value of rice. In Sahu, the people (men and women), came to picture themselves as women who gave birth to rice for the Sultan of Ternate (Visser: 1989). The new division of labour was also a response to regional geopolitical pressures and influenced the decision of the men of Halmahera to become sea pirates.

3.3. The Impact of a Development Project

In the following subsection I will discuss two issues: the agricultural transformation from coconut plantation to bananas and the ritualised tradition as a means for defending labour rights.

3.3.1. From Coconuts to Bananas

The importance of coconuts in the life of the Galela can hardly be exaggerated. The economic value of coconuts was already proved, long before the Indonesian government introduced the *Small Coconut Development Project* (SCDP). Missionaries from the *Utrechtse Zendings Vereeniging* (UZV) introduced coconuts as an economic commodity in the beginning of the 20th Century.[138] A. Hueting and Metz set up a coconut company called *Wari Wosia Klapper Onderneming* (WWKO) in 1915 (Magany: 1984, 120-121; see also Chapter IV). It took time to receive permission from the Sultan of Ternate over the land status of the plantation (see Magany: 1984, 287). However, before WWKO began operations in Tobelo they had already set up a private coconut plantation whose centre of production was on Morotai Island. This company was named *Morotai Klapper Cultuur Maatschappij* (MKCM). The Director of this private company was a Roman Catholic from Holland. He brought many Catholic *koeli's* from Timor to work on the plantation.

The missionaries introduced principles of self-support through commercial farming. At first, there were not many people who cultivated coconuts professionally. At the end of the 19th century, the missionaries influenced

[137] An early missionary quoted by Platenkamp reported that women worked in the rice fields, while her husband looked for income from the sea. Men brought back money that was needed for the traditional rituals (Platenkamp: 1988, 43). The men from Galela, Tobelo, and Kao worked as professional sea-pirates. Ritual warfare is enacted in the marriage rituals, which reflect the professional work of the men in the 17th –19th centuries (see Chapter IV).

[138] The dependence of UZV missionaries on funding from the mission centre in Holland was minimized through coconut cultivation as a commodity that could sell on the world market in the 19th century. The economic crisis that attacked the Netherlands and other European countries was due to the wars in several parts of Europe such as France. The first Dutch missionary to Galela was H. van Dijken who arrived in 1866. He chose to cultivate coconuts out of financial necessity and because of the position of coconuts in the world market. See Christian Heersink on the role of coconuts in the trade politics of the 19th-20th Centuries in Eastern Indonesia (Heersink: 1999).

changes in the planting schedule of rice. The Sultan of Ternate approved the idea of coconut development because he hoped this activity would help overcome the serious problem of piracy on the Moluccan Sea. The professional sea pirates came from Galela, Tobelo, Kao and Loloda (see Chapter IV). He hoped that the missionaries could convince the local people to shift their profession from sea piracy to become self-sufficient farmers. Coconuts were introduced as a commodity, without regard to religious affiliation, in the 1980s. The Indonesian government developed a hybridisation project in partnership with the World Bank and the Asian Developmental Bank. The SCDP project aimed to bring economic prosperity and self-sufficiency to the people of Galela.

Oom Din was the head of the groups whose members agreed to cultivate coconuts as a commodity. *Oom* Din donated some of his land to members of his SCDP group who owned no land because he had lots of land inherited from his father. The project combined two important methods. First, families were seen as the primary production unit at the village level. By giving hybrid coconut seeds and fertilizer to the farmers, the government hoped that the society would increase their income and contribute to the developmental activities on the village. Secondly, the project also gave farmers the opportunity to own their own land within a larger coconut plantation.

Economic and social relations overlap with each other on many levels. Farmers need to work together to clear out the forests and plant coconut seeds. During the period of cultivation, the farmers also need to work together. Because farmers received coconut seeds and fertilizer, they had to be monitored regularly by officials from the Agricultural Department at the district level. The officials visited farmers to provide agricultural extension education and answered their questions. They maintained a relationship with the farmers until the production of coconuts showed that their efforts brought success and the farmer could return the initial credits they had provided.

During the coconut harvest, the system of working together (*makokirio*), received a new meaning. Cooperative work is an ancient tradition, as displayed in the rituals of the rice harvest, in which the people rotate to work in each other's fields. During the coconut harvest, members of the groups are remunerated for their labour at a rate of Rp. 500 per tree plus their noon meal *(ma ngaino yaho odo)*. After all the coconuts are on the ground, the owners gather together, open the coconuts and scrape out the white inner meat from their shells, and put them on drying racks (*para-para*). It takes about 24 hours of grilling for the white coconut meat to become copra. The process of grilling is called *fufu*. For a 1-hectare coconut plantation, it takes 10 working days to harvest the coconuts and make them into copra.[139]

[139] It needs 3-5 people to carry out the process of making copra for 1-hectare coconut plantation. The details of the work are as follow: (1) Picking the coconuts takes 2 days. (2) Gathering the coconuts from the ground takes 2 days. (3) Scraping out the fresh white meat from the coconuts takes 2 days. (4). Grilling the fresh white meat of the coconuts takes 1 day. (5) Putting the copra into sacks takes 1 day. In the process of harvesting copra, the farmers need lots of money to pay

In spite of the modest success of the SCDP, in 1990 the government decided Galela should become the centre of a modern agribusiness, which concentrated on banana cultivation. PT GAI, a multinational agricultural corporation was appointed to carry out the development of this project.[140] During my research in 1993 the people's land was purchased by the Banana Company based on carefully controlled prices according to the following classification scheme (Risakotta:1995a): forest land was valued at Rp. 100,000. per ha; scrub or straw land was Rp. 500,000. per ha; uncultivated coconut land was Rp. 1,000,000. per ha; cultivated coconut land (non-SCDP) was Rp. 2,100,000. per ha; and finally, SCDP cultivated coconut land was Rp. 2,200,000. per ha. The selling of farmers land was still going on during my 1999 fieldwork. The Banana Company already owned a total of 3,500 ha. Among more than 200 households in Ngidiho, there were only a few families who still owned their own land around the village. In 1994, the Banana Company had purchased 55.07% of all the land that had been owned by farmers in the area.[141]

The Ngidiho people distinguish between the soil, what is planted in it, and the plants. Symbolically, according to the Galela, the Sultan of Ternate owns the land. The Sultan owns the land but the people can use it. People own whatever they plant. When land was unlimited, anyone had the right to use land if they cut down the jungle and planted rice or a garden. Jungle land was "free". This activity in Galela is called *tolagumi*, and means "to open a path". After carrying out *tolagumi*, people don't have to plant anything on the land in order to lay claim to its use. People could extend their land by just cutting down tree branches to mark the new borders. In Sahu, according to Visser, the action of *dolagumi* (Sahu; Galela: *tolagumi*) served to keep a balance in the environment (Visser: 1989, 50).

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the salary of the labourers. This is one reason why farmers need the supporting credit from the permanent stores or the KUD for the continuity of their work.

[140] Early surveys of the Banana Company in Galela were based on the research of a Japanese ethnographic team that studied banana culture in Galela (See Ishige: 1980). This region was noted for its agricultural potential since the Second World War. The Banana Company chose Galela because of its stability of temperature for the entire year. Temperatures in Galela range between 30 and 32 degree Celsius. Geographically, the location of Halmahera Island is strategic for shipping bananas to other countries such as Japan and China. Although PT GAI originally exported bananas to Japan during my 1999 fieldwork, the Director of the company told me that they had shifted their exports to China and Taiwan. It only takes 6 days for a ship to travel from Galela to Chinese land.

[141] Because of the outbreak of violence that limited my time for fieldwork, I could not find new data on this issue. In my 1994 research, there were 8 villages in which most of the villagers had sold their land to the Banana Company. The villages were: (1) Toweka (60,08%), (2) Ngidiho (55,07%), (3) Lalonga (47,2%), (4) Soa Sio (35,5%), (5) Limau (34,6%), (6) Duma (23,3%), Gotalamo (21,6%) and Makete (8,9%). The homogeneous Muslim villages were Toweka, Soa Sio, Lalonga and Gotalamo. Toweka is divided into two villages, Toweka and Simau. The homogeneous Christian village were Duma and Makete. The heterogeneous villages with a Muslim majority are Ngidiho and Limau (see Risakotta: 1995a, 14-15). The total of land sold to PT GAI in 1994 was 1.947,1 ha. The rest of the land (total 3,500 ha) was bought by the company between 1994 and 1999. In 1994, the number of farmers who had no land was: in Soa Sio (6.3 %), Toweka (6.9%), Simau (23.4%), Ngidiho (25%), Makete (12.6%), Gotalamo (0.69%). In Duma, most people still owned land even though they had sold some to the Banana Company. I did not collect data for Lalonga and Limau (Risakotta: 1995a, 15).

Plants have owners, however there are plants that cannot be claimed as owned by someone in particular. I was surprised when teenagers, who walked with me through a coconut plantation, stopped and picked papayas from the land of other people whom I didn't know and who were not there. They explained that tradition ensures their right to pick the fruit of trees or plants that were not planted by anyone. Papaya trees grow everywhere because birds spread their seeds. Therefore I had free fruit in Ngidiho.

Picture 33: Children picking ripe pa payas.

With this way of thinking, I could understand why the Ngidiho people sold their land so easily to the Banana Company. The company persuaded the people to sell their land using traditional reasoning: the state owns the land, not the people; the people just use it. The people didn't have any legal papers to prove their ownership of the land. Another argument, which was built upon the material conditions and historical memory of the people, was that sooner or later the government would take back the land. The people knew that they didn't have the right to their land because they didn't have legal papers to prove it. However the farmers of the SCDP were a major exception. As members of SCDP, they received land certification.

Farmers who had SCDP land certification could sell their land at a much higher price if their coconut plantation was in good condition. Of course the credit they owed to SCDP was deducted from the price, so the actual money they received was often much less. Farmers who had only enjoyed the SCDP project for 10 years had to give up their land in exchange for money. They could survive, as

long as the cash held out. The company never paid them compensation for land, but only for plants. When PT GAI paid the people, the Sultan of Ternate also received compensation since he claimed ownership over the land in Northern Halmahera.

During the reformation era, in February 1999, students from Galela who were studying in Ambon and Makassar, came home to Galela and brought the idea that the Banana Company ought to pay them the value of the land that had not been paid in the 1990s. Obviously, the Banana Company used the traditional concepts of land for their own benefit and was able to buy the land with very little money. In contrast, the students used the Indonesian legal system to prove that according to modern law the people owned both the land and the plants so that the Banana Company should be forced to pay the farmers a reasonable compensation for their land.

The reformation movement influenced the farmers of Galela to participate in demonstrations demanding compensation from PT GAI for their land. The reformation movement to compensate the farmers reached the village of Ngidiho in February 1999. The movement succeeded because the Banana Company granted Rp. 600 million to all the farmers who had sold their land to the company. A source close to the situation told me that Ngidiho was supposed to receive Rp. 150 million but in fact the farmers only received Rp. 75 million. The head of the Reformation Movement paid this money directly to the farmers based on a list of farmers that was drawn up by the head of the village. However many farmers in Ngidiho complained because their names were not included on the list even though they too sold their land.

Farmers who didn't receive their money brought their case to the district court. They accused the head of the Reformation movement of manipulating the money. Among those accused were some Christian farmers. This scandal had a wide impact among the farmers. They used the scandal to reject the re-nomination of the current Village Head who allegedly knew about the balance of the money that should have been paid to the farmers. They also questioned the use of a subsidy granted to the village. The subsidy was used to help build the village mosque, but none was given to the church. A Muslim candidate for Village Head, who held the position of Village Secretary, used this issue to attract political supporter from the Christians of Ngidiho.

Those farmers who still owned their land mocked the reformation movement. *Oom* Din felt that the movement was motivated by self-interest. He criticized students who studied outside Galela and returned to mobilise farmers against the Banana Company. He felt that they didn't understand the process of land ownership. With strong emotions that revealed his inner feelings, *Oom* Din said sharply,

> "My family and I never lost our home and land because we were afraid to watch the Ngidiho people unloading all their fancy new things from the bus. They bought

> everything in Tobelo after they sold their land to the Banana Company. When we went to our fields, we always covered our eyes because we were afraid that if we saw all their nice stuff we too would be tempted to do the same and sell our property to the company. Those people have lost their fields, but they now have nice houses. They used the compensation to renovate their houses".

Oom Din's story reminded me of the time when I was staying and working in Tobelo during the first years of the Banana Company, in 1992-1993. From our office, which was located on the main road from Tobelo to Galela, I observed the intense mobilisation of people between Galela-Tobelo-Galela. Buses and trucks moved up and down the road all day long, full of passengers and goods for transport to Galela. In 1999, *Oom* Din told me that during that period the Galela created a new term, *gagasa* that means someone who quickly changes their life style after receiving lots of money. Now the word was used by young women to tease the young men who come to court them. They ask, "What do you have that makes you dare think that I could be attracted to you?"

In those years, *Oom* Din and several other farmers formed a society to resist the pressure and persuasion used by the company and government to force people to sell their land. However *Oom* Din acknowledged that their position was not easy. In the end he had to trade his land to the company because it was surrounded by land already owned by the Banana Company. Fortunately he did not have to sell the land but rather traded it for another piece of land, which the Company had just bought from other people. This land is still close to the public plantation, located near to Ngidiho. The banana plantation is bordered by a drainage system, which is about 2 meters wide and 3 meters deep.

In spite of the pressure, there are still people who kept their own coconut plantations even though their land became an enclave surrounded by the Company's banana cultivation. Haler Sou is a prominent example of the farmer's resistance. In 1995, when I began to study this community, Haler Sou was the Principal of the elementary school in Ngidiho and the head of a SCDP farmer's group. He was determined to struggle for the defence of his group's land. He was arrested by the police in 1993. His arrest created fear among the common people and induced some to sell their land. I met him in 1995 and later felt grief when I heard of his death from illness. He succeeded in retaining ownership of his coconut plantation, even though he was imprisoned and fired from his position as Principal of the school. Nevertheless, his family continues to live from the plantation and his wife even went on the hajj in 1998 with the income from selling their copra.

I observed the sensitivity of the society in Galela at the beginning of my research in 1995. The government and the Banana Company used leaders of adat, religion and village government as channels of influence to ensure the success of their development project. Village Heads, as well as religious and adat leaders received cash incentives to support the program. Village Heads received a monthly salary

(Risakotta:1995a). The government promoted this "top-down" project as an attempt to redress imbalances in development between Western Indonesia and Eastern Indonesia. Under the leadership of President Suharto, big investors from Java were invited to expand their businesses in the Eastern part of Indonesia. "Incidentally" the project wiped out one development project (SCDP), which primarily benefited small farmers, and replaced it with another development project that promised high profits for developers in Jakarta.

Picture 34: The coconut plantation of a resistant farmer in the midst of the banana plantation.

Intense debates and doubt divided Galela society in the controversy over the Banana Company's presence in Galela. The agro industry brought fundamental changes in the everyday practices of the people. Cash and consumer goods became much more common, including televisions, videos and mass media from around the world. Many men could not adjust to the regular, tedious work of the banana plant and became unemployed, while women took over much of the banana production. Gender roles changed as women controlled more of the families' income. Many traditional adat rules became irrelevant. The tensions prompted by extremely rapid social and economic changes such as these, no doubt contributed to the later eruption of extreme violence. As time passed, the meaning of the changes becomes gradually clearer and the people themselves understood more about what was gained and lost in giving up their land to PT GAI. For better or worse, agro business is an ongoing part of their economic and social life.

At the beginning, the people of Galela were confused about what they should do. The physical abuse experienced by Haler Sou, the strong support of the development project by government, adat and religious leaders, and the offer of more cash money than they had ever seen before, convinced many farmers to sell their land. In fact, adat, religion and modernity all seemed like a part of development. They were used to submitting to the dictates of adat, religion and government. They felt ashamed to appear as backward indigenous people who would reject a modern development project like the banana industry. However

they were not stupid. Farmers often played double roles, both resisting the agro business and then selling their land. They negotiated compromises to gain multiple benefits from as many parties as possible, in order to survive the onslaught of modernity (Risakotta: 1995a, 115-177).

Although the Banana Company took over ownership of the farmers' means of production (their coconut plantations), most people didn't feel it. The Company paid for the land and the government persuaded the people that it was in their own interest. The ideology and practices of the government and the Company, backed by religious and adat leaders, formed the consciousness of the people. The company promised to hire the local people at good wages, as labourers to work on the banana plantation.

Unfortunately lack of education limited the capacity of most Galelans to compete for good positions in the labour market at PT GAI. Muslim Galelans were especially disadvantaged. Both Christians and Muslims from Galela worked at cultivating the fields or in the packinghouses. However, in order to be hired as a foreman, a person had to have received a modern education, including a basic knowledge of modern methods for cultivating, treating and shipping bananas to a global market. Management positions were open to labourers who had a strong educational tradition such as the people from Duma, Soatobaru and Togawa. All of these are Christian villages in Galela that have a tradition of mission schools. Young engineers also came from the Christian areas of North Sulawesi and Toraja. They were appointed Assistants below the Director. The main Director of the company was a Christian from the Philippines. Several Muslim labourers from the North Moluccas were also appointed Assistants, but the management of the company was weighted towards Christians.

During my fieldwork, I heard reports of dissatisfaction among the labourers about the social differentiation that began to appear in Galela. The activists in the Reformation Movement in Galela were from the village of Toweka a Muslim village where half of the inhabitants sold their land to PT GAI. They demanded additional compensation for land that they sold a few years before. Their demand was delivered to Assistant Managers who were not indigenous to Galela. Some of the protestors already associated the ownership of the company with "Christians from outside Galela." Even though the company paid off the demands of the Reformation Movement the tensions did not subside because half of the money seemed to disappear.

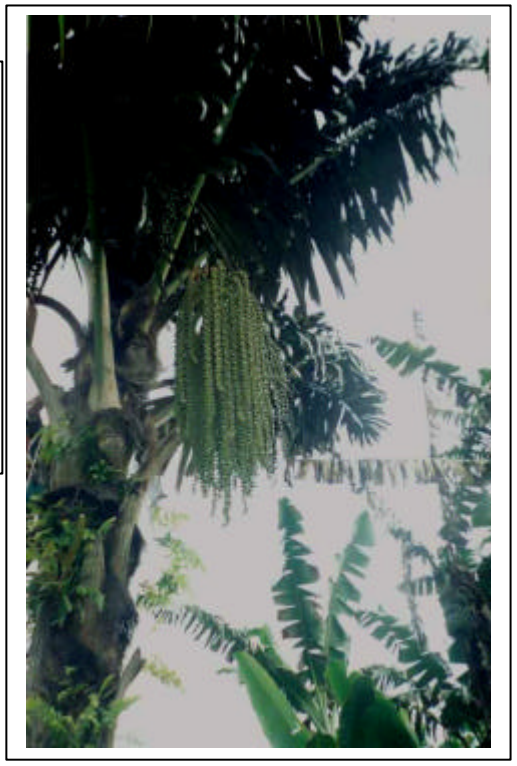
The loss of land caused decreased the production of rice and other plants needed by the Galelans. For example, it became more and more difficult to find the particular plant whose leafs is used for plaiting mats. The Galelans grow these rattan plants around their plantations (*raki*) and gardens (*doro*) as fences. *Mama* Iana, who always plaits her own mats, takes the basic materials from her own garden. *Oom* Din is responsible for planting this plant. The *enau* trees (sugar palm) that grow widely in the area also became limited around the villages. However, sugar palm trees are still available in Magiloi, which is a new plantation area for the Ngidiho people. Changes in the availability of traditional materials

that are gathered from decreasing amounts of *raki* and *doro* upsets the traditional patterns of ritual exchange and solidarity in the villages.


Pictures 35-36: The material for making mats grows in *Oom* Din's plantation;
***Mama* Iana makes the mats in her living room.**

On the other hand, PT GAI stimulated the development of new businesses. For example, those who still owned their own land and grew the local species of banana could sell their bananas. The Banana Company grew a special banana called the Calvanish species (Risakotta: 1995a, 15). The presence of many labours at the company plantation increased the demand for local bananas as the main consumption of them. The decrease in rice production did not have as much impact as it might have elsewhere, since rice is not eaten at every meal as it is in Java. Although rice is one of the main crops for traditional exchange in Galela, it is not the staple food. As a "new comer" crop, rice is placed in a special position as a food with rich ritual meanings.[142]

[142] This is different from the role of rice in Java. In company with other dishes, people in Java eat rice for breakfast, lunch and dinner. When I stayed in Ngidiho, I felt like I was staying in the Netherlands or the US where it felt inappropriate for the local people to begin every meal with rice or soup.



Pictures 37–38: A view of Magiloi behind the banana plantation; Sugar cane plants in Magiloi.

Rustam Ayub, the younger brother of the Village Head in Ngidiho was inspired to professionally redesign his *doro* by copying the methods of banana cultivation used by the Banana Company. He took me to his garden to show me his new planting system for local bananas, that he applies in his doro. His bananas are exported to Ternate weekly. He plants banana trees to encircle his *raki* (coconut plantation). When he can buy a *raki* from someone, he rearranges the field, giving more space to planting bananas rather than coconuts. He believed in good prospects for the local bananas as household economic prosperity, and the village's income in general, increased. Once a week he could make about Rp. 150,000. But when the violence occurred in Ternate at the beginning of November 1999 and the banana buyers from Ternate could not buy his bananas, it hit him badly. Many of his bananas just rotted. The riots and violence in Ternate and Tidore before my departure to Java caused the people to throw away their agricultural products.

The decreasing land also led to the extinction of wild animals like pigs in the nearby Galelan forest. Now the people must travel far, to the borders between the Districts of Galela and Loloda, if they wish to hunt for wild pigs. As a result the Christians began to raise pigs in their back yards in the village. Before the arrival of the Banana Company, there was very little pig husbandry in the village.

Ecological transformation affected changes in hunting patterns and influenced the relations between Christians and Muslims in Galela at large. Pig husbandry in Christian or mixed villages increased fears. Muslims became reluctant to visit Christians or even to just walk on foot among the villages. In Ngidiho, the village authorities requested the Christians to move their pigpens away from public space or roads where Muslims frequently travel. If someone caught a pig wandering out of its pigpen or entering their garden they were given the right to attack and wound the pig.

According to a Muslim informant, the tradition of exchanging visits between Christian and Muslim families, even in different villages, used to be very strong. However, this tradition was practiced less and less due to the spread of pigs in the public spaces of the Christian villages. In villages where the majority is Christian the Muslims cannot prevent the pigs from wandering around. The Galela raise animals such as goats, chickens, ducks, and cows without keeping them in pens. However in the majority Muslim villages Christians are required to keep their pigs penned.

Two other sources of conflict between Christian and Muslim villages are not directly connected with ecological or economic change, i.e. football competitions and youth parties. Football games between villages often erupted into fights after the match. Two years before the 1999-2000 violence, there was also a big fight between the young people from Duma and Dukolamo over differences of opinion about youth parties and alcohol consumption. Duma is a Christian village and Dukolamo is a mixed village. However violence between young people over football matches or parties were solved directly by the local police.

3.3.2. Traditional Ritual as a Means to Achieve Labour Rights

The idea that changes in patterns of commodity exchange in agricultural societies transforms solidarity relationships has been widely discussed. The introduction of rice to the life of Galela prompted the people to reorganize their division of labour. New *adat* (tradition) regulations helped them cope with the challenges for survival in the new situation. The people also worked out cultural adjustments in the period of agricultural transformation from rice to coconut plantations. Even more radical changes seem to be required by the transformation from coconuts to bananas. But changes are not always in the direction of "modernisation". During my research in 1999, I heard that indigenous labours from Galela were re-evaluating the terms of their work for the Banana Company. The labourers requested the company to provide them rice again, rather than money, as a labour supplement.

During my earlier research in 1995, male labourers received a supplement of rice in addition to their main monthly salary. Rice was not given to the married female labours whose husbands were employees of the company. The assumption was that the husband was the head of the household and his wife was just a follower who could eat from her husband's rice (Risakotta: 1995a). The people of Galela protested this regulation because it contradicted their traditional labour practices.

Both men and women in Galela traditionally receive a salary and a food supplement. The payment for women to pull the weeds from a plantation is Rp.10,000 per day (US$1.20), plus dinner. This salary is higher than the wages paid to labourers in the Banana Company. At the Banana company women labourers are also paid Rp.10,000 per day but the women have to bring their own lunch. If the Company does not provide a rice subsidy then the owners of the plantation should provide them with lunch. For the women of Galela, the rice supplement was considered a substitute for the lunch they would receive for cleaning (*mangi yoohodo*) a coconut plantation.

The women workers in Galela used this cultural argument to persuade the company to revise its policy of only giving one rice subsidy per family. From 1996-1997, the Company distributed a rice supplement to both men and women labourers equally. However in 1997, labourers proposed a new model of payment, requesting cash instead of rice. Thenceforth the labourers' salary included both their monthly wages and a cash equivalent for the rice supplement. Unfortunately the Indonesian economic crisis resulted in a sharp increase in the cost of rice, which in a short period rose from Rp. 900 per kg. to Rp. 3,000 per kg. The labourers felt that their salary was eaten up just for buying rice. After a year of negotiations, in August 1999 the labourers again began to receive their rice supplement instead of cash. During this period of crisis the traditional barter economy reappeared as labourers exchanged rice for bananas or other crops. Bartering became popular, not in order to make money but to reduce hunger. The labourers had rice from their subsidy but did not have their own gardens, while local villagers had vegetable gardens but no rice. Bartering benefited both.

Pictures 39-40: Traditional farm labour in the village; Modern work methods banana plantation.

In 1997 when the economic crisis in Indonesia began, those who still had their own plantations were far better off than labourers at the Banana Company, whose monthly salary was not enough to cover their basic cost of everyday living. The situation was especially difficult for labourers who lived in Banana Company barracks and had to buy all their daily necessities. Several Assistants of the Banana Company reported that outsider labourers from Java or elsewhere were

more diligent than the Galela labours. They worked more hours at the company or added overtime just in order to get enough to eat. People from Galela still had access to food from their families and neighbours.

The Javanese labourers had permanent labour status (*Syarat Kecakapan Umum* = SKU). However, half of Galela who worked at the Banana Company only received status as free day labourers (*Buruh Harian Lepas* = BHL). Indigenous Galelans who worked at the Banana Company preferred their status as free or non-permanent labourers. This permitted them to work in their gardens, planting crops which supplied their daily food. They used their back yards or empty land in the Company complex where they stayed.

3.4. Conclusion: A Political Conception of Culture

Yoshida makes the observation that the Galela's the culture is syncretic. Various different elements are formed into a mosaic (Yoshida: 1980, 106). Each element is from a different pattern but is reshaped and modified by its contact with the local ideology and practices of Galela. The Galelas' contact with people from neighbouring cultures like Austronesia, before the arrival of universal religions like Islam and Christianity, showed their ability to resist outside efforts to dominate them. Sometimes dominant influences from without were too strong, so they adjusted their own knowledge and practices to the new reality. For example, in the marriage rituals we saw the combination of traditional practices with Islam.

Sometimes efforts to overcome the inconsistency between old traditions and a new situation, works well; but sometimes not. Most communities in Galela, especially the Muslims whom I studied, are very creative in modifying their local practices to fit into the modern context. They are able to reformulate traditional knowledge and practices so that they are consistent with new knowledge and new practices. The Banana Company changed the agricultural system of the society, especially when the people sold their land. The Galela transformed their patterns of labour in response to new conceptions of banana cultivation which included new industrial rituals like time clocks. In doing so they put aside or modified their own rich traditions of banana cultivation (Risakotta: 1995a).

Talcott Parsons says that power is a variable that can be calculated, although it cannot be counted. Nevertheless it is accessible to all the members of a society (Parsons: 1997). Power can be expanded or contracted depending on the capability of society to reach its goals through political achievements and the accumulation of economic forces. The expansion or contraction of power occurs in families, kinship networks, villages and on up to the level of the state or even the whole globe. In the context of society in Ngidiho, the centre of power at the level of the family used to be centralised in parental authority but has now changed. Women's roles are still limited as religious or adat leaders. But their new-found power through economic achievement is seen in their ability to adjust to new working opportunities at the Banana Company.

The transformation of the economic and ecological context in Galela led to a reformulation of social and cultural customs. The change in the material base of society forced the people to re-write their basic concepts about what they do in their everyday life. This is not an easy task. The gap between the older generation and younger generation hinders the reformulation of ideology in the cultural practices of society. However the changes that have shaped the social history of the Ngidiho people raise both serious concerns and real hope that through this painful process whole society will become more consciousness of its own identity. The struggle to find an identity in the midst of change is one of the factors that lie behind the violence of 1999 – 2000.

Power and identity are related to how the ritual traditions of society are carried out. For example, who makes the regulations of adat and determines the traditional fines? One of my informants in Ngidiho who used to be the Village Head (*Kimalaha*) says decisions were carried out by the *dola moi*, which was a gathering of leaders to reach a consensus.[143] This meeting included *Kapitan* (Captains), *Jouhukums* (adat leaders) and *Kimalaha* (Village Heads). "Captain" was the term used to refer to a war leader. The title was inherited. The Sultan of Ternate gave this title to those who helped him suppress the frequent rebellions that occurred in his region. *Jouhukum* was a title given to elderly leaders who were wise in the knowledge of *adat*. The status of *Kimalaha* was like the position of the village head in the modern era of Indonesia. *Kimalaha* conveyed government decisions to the society on matters such as tax regulations.

The decisions reached by consensus in the *dola moi* were delivered to the people (*kawasa*), as official pronouncements from their government. The people were expected to discuss the new decision. If the community did not agree, the *dola moi* would gather again to re-discuss the issues. The *Sangaji*, or representative of the Sultan of Ternate, legalised the announcement when it was the result of the agreement of both the *dola moi* and the *kawasa*. When the Indonesian government imposed its own system of village government the people of Galela the traditional positions disappeared and were replaced by Indonesian government institutions. The *dola moi* was replaced by the *Lembaga Ketahanan Masyarakat Desa* (Village People's Defence Institution or LKMD) and the *Lembaga Masyarakat Desa* (Village People's Institution or LMD). The *Kimalaha* was renamed the *Kepala Desa* (Village Head). Positions such as the *Kapitan* and the *Jouhukum* disappeared, only to resurface during the violence of 1999-2000.

Sometimes there are policies that show inequality between different groups in society. The Galela marriage rituals illustrate a model of ritualised exchange that is practiced by different parties, who negotiate their power by exchanging labour, services and various kinds of wealth. The system is designed to maintain trust and equality in the society. Ritualised exchange is a method for negotiating power. The Galela practice gift exchange primarily in relations with people from outside their nuclear family. The Ngidiho people believe that relationships between siblings should be unconditional. However relationships with other people are

[143] See (van Baarda: 1908, 45).

conditional. Marriage is a way to extend family relationships but its regulation has to be created. The indigenous people of Ngidiho accept foreigners and strangers into their families through marriage because they believe that a change in blood relationship via marriage also strengthens their existence as spirits after death. The goal of their spiritual transformation after death is to become one of the ancestral spirits (*o dilike*).

The Galelans practice ritual exchange with two primary purposes. The first is economic, while the second is for friendship and brother/sisterhood. After a marriage takes place, brother and sister relationships are established among the members of the two families. This differs from the common practice of marriage in the West, for example in the Netherlands, where only the bride and groom are considered related to each other's respective families. The bride and groom's families still remain essentially unrelated to each other, except through the bride and groom. Therefore, it is a mistake to understand *fongu* and the exchange process as a payment of the wife's family (WF) to the husband's family (HF) to pay for her reproductive capacities. Platenkamp oversimplification of these issues is made worse by his use of the terms "wife giver" (WG) and "wife taker" (WT) to designate the two families (Platenkamp: 1988). The Dutch missionary, H. van Dijken, displayed a similar prejudice in prohibiting new Christians from practicing ritual exchange in the marriage process with the exception of the bride wealth (*mas kawin*).

Reciprocity is a central ingredient of the Ngidiho people's efforts to expand their family networks. The narration of *the wedding party* describes the practice of *jojobo* or the general exchange of material and immaterial help, including rituals. The exchange of "work" or *jojobo* includes the whole community (*kawasa*), regardless of blood ties or marriage bonds; it makes everyone a part of your family.

The life practices of the Galela should be seen in their totality.[144] The principles of exchange can strengthen solidarity or sharpen antagonisms. Exchange is a ritual practice that can be found in all aspects of the Galela people's life, including economic, religious and political life. Ideally the practices of exchange promote honesty and respect within human relations and acknowledge both the economic and spiritual needs that are basic characteristics of the Ngidiho people's identity. The violation of these principles can create chaos and imbalance in the society.

Practices of exchange do not guarantee either justice or balance within a society. The Banana Company contributed some positive aspects for strengthening the economic capabilities of the Eastern part of Indonesia and bringing new technology and skills to Galela. However at the same time, it defrauded the people of their land by subtle means. The Reformation Movement in Galela protested against perceived imbalances and injustices in the exchange process. The entire

[144] See the analysis of E. E. Evans-Pritchard in his Introduction to the English version of The Gift by Marcel Mauss. He uses the word 'total' to explain the patterns of exchange in ancient societies. In the process of ritual exchange, various phenomena that are separated in the structure of modern knowledge, are unified within the totality of the context of a traditional society (Mauss: 1954, vii).

society in Galela participated in the struggle of the farmers to increase their compensation for the land.

Galelan students who were studying in Ambon and Makassar brought home ideas about political and economic reformation that they heard at the national level. The radical structural changes in Galelan ecology and society introduced by the Banana Company were not anticipated by the national industrial engineering policy that approved the project. The project should have involved more of the local community as subjects in planning development. For example, a project like SCDP in which the people are integral to the development process (*perusahan inti rakyat=PIR, nucleus estates*) could have been used by the Banana Company. In that case, the people could be taught to cultivate bananas for the Company on their own land. Or they could contract their land to the Company for a set period, for example ten years. These models are alternatives to the Banana Company's policy of taking over the people's land for a pittance (Risakotta:1995a). The imbalance of the exchange was not immediately apparent to the people because their subsistence economy was on a totally different level from the international economy of multinational corporations. Their cultural traditions of land ownership were also different.

Of course, from the Banana Company's perspective, they had to calculate the risks and likelihood of profit. Things like export targets, discipline and working hours could be a problem if they relinquished total control over their labour and means of production. After all, you cannot fire a lazy worker if he or she owns the means of production (land)! However these alternatives should be discussed openly with the people. After all, it is their land and their labour. It is not unreasonable to imagine that they would work even harder if they shared in both the risks and the profits of the venture. Those who provide the capital, knowledge and technique might need to reduce their expectations of huge profits, but they might also have reduced their risks related to major social upheaval. Obviously, the change of social structure in the society after the establishment of the Banana Company could become a boomerang towards the company if it came to be seen as the enemy.

Chapter IV
Ritual, Identity and Politics in the History of the North Moluccas

> "The mind of man is capable of anything because everything is in it, all the past as well as all the future" (Conrad: 1985 [1902], 52).

This chapter reveals a truth in Joseph Conrad's quotation. We will see how governmental policies before and during the Colonial period affected the identity formation of the people in Ngidiho and the Moluccas at large. The people maintain symbols and stories from the past as part of their historical understanding of the present. The chapter begins with a narration of the *Cakalele* dance performed at one of the wedding events in Ngidiho. This story is a starting point for revealing the complex social structure of the people and how they build loyalty in the community.

The Moluccas became a capital resource that brought the West to Indonesia and changed the material context and historical meaning of the region. Colonial competition for trade monopolies employed competing ideologies, which aimed to format the identity of the society in order to control its population and exploit its resources. Two methods were employed in the politics of trade. First, the colonialists employed a method of rational subjectivity. Secondly they tried to mould the people's spiritual subjectivity. Changes in global politics transformed small villages in the District of Galela, North Moluccas.

4.1. The *Cakalele* Dance

The sound of barking and the beating of a drum sends shivers down my spine. The urging voices of the watchers stimulate the passions of the dancers. They jump and leap with energy and rhythm. Each dancer holds a sword and a wooden shield. The wooden shields are decorated with mother of pearl shells, formed into the shape of eyes. People refer to them as "the eyes of their ancestors". Half hysterical, the watchers also begin jumping and leaping, following the rhythm of the music. The drums beat faster and faster. My hair is standing on end and I feel like I just want to leave the place. However the call of the *Cakalele* dance is just too strong for me to go and hide away. Showing his muscles, like a true man, the male dancer *(o soda)*[145] wields his sword in his right hand and his shield in his left. Suddenly a female dancer *(o sisi)* comes forward screaming, he---he---he---he--- and joins with the male dancer. The bravery of the male dancer enchants the woman who displays her gentleness and courage. Without holding anything in her hands, she rotates the palm of her hand beautifully as if she were protecting something within her hand. The sound of laughter swells up as the people feel

[145] Platenkamp notes that the Dutch missionary, van Baarda, wrote the name of the war dance as *soda*. See (Platenkamp: 1988, 174).

pride and joy to see the strong and brave man facing the lovely woman. As they dance, the watchers gradually fall into a trance.

A male dancer, who was the former Village Head, jumps out of the dancing circle.[146] He is searching for someone. He stops in front of a man his age, in his fortieth year. He bows to the man and gives him his sword and shield. The man in front of him is chosen to replace him in the dance. The falteringly voices and loud applause of the watchers welcome the new dancer.

The same woman is still dancing. She approaches the new dancer, laughing and shouting "he---he---he---he--" as she passionately invites the man into the rhythm of the dance. People scream to each other the word *"tokanali!"*. This word means, "Joyful like the devil!" The extraordinary sound of the music seems to awaken a mystery within the hearts of those present. Each dances in turn until they pass the dance on to someone else.

A familiar voice rings out from one of male dancers who is searching for someone to take his place. "Nardi! Nardi!" It is the voice of *Oom* Din. Then the dancers chase *Pak* Nardi who is known in the village as the friend of *Oom* Din. With a respectful nod, *Oom* Din bows low and gracefully transfers the sword and shield to *Pak* Nardi. The people shout enthusiastically.

Pak Nardi dances with style, holding sword and shield differently from the dancers from Ngidiho. His style of dance reminds me of the *kuda kepang* dance that is popular in Java.[147] No one seems to care if his style of dancing is different. All eyes stare at him. The same female dancer is still shouting and rotating the palms of her hands.[148] *Pak* Nardi dances as if he is riding a horse. He waves the sword and shield rhythmically with the beating of the drums. The deafening music races faster and faster. *Pak* Nardi whirls round and round, thrusting with his sword. Music speeds to a fever pitch. Suddenly we are shocked as a great noise rose from the centre of the arena holding the performance. People shout! The music comes to an abrupt halt. *Pak* Nardi sways and falls. He collapses, sprawling out on the asphalt road near the wide tent set up for *the wedding party* of Emang and Mala.

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[146] This former head of the village and the woman of Ngidiho always are chosen to represent Galela for the performance of the *Cakalele* dance to welcome regional government officers who come from outside Galela.

[147] In the Javanese language, it is called *Jaran kepang* (horse braid). I remember the *jatilan* dance that was performed by an art group in Yogyakarta to celebrate the winner of PDI-P in the 1999 general election. This dance is the people dance in Java in general. The faces of Jatilan dancers are covered with make-up and they dress up with batik. This dance aims at showing the magic forces of the dancers. The leader of the dancer doesn't dance, but he functions to give consciousnesses and invulnerability to dancers who are in trance. The more the dance is performed, the more dancers go into a trance. They dance more than two hours. When the dancers are in a trance they drink dirty water that is provided for washing their faces or they even eat shards of glass. The inspiration for this dance was taken from the story of horse troops gathered and trained by Sultan Hamengku Buwono I, who was the King of Yogyakarta, to attack the Dutch colonizers in Java. (See the broshure, "Anak Wayang Indonesia", Yogyakarta: 2002. cf. Peacock: 1968).

[148] cf. D. Nijland: 1994.

The people immediately call *Oom* Din. They all know *Oom* Din is needed at this critical moment. Then I see *Oom* Din comes close to the unconscious and rigid body of *Pak* Nardi whose empty eyes bulge out, looking up at nothing. The voice of *Oom* Din echoes, as he utters the word "*toka"* ("devil"), in the left ear of *Pak* Nardi. Then he utters the word "*bismillah rraham nirrahiim"* in the right ear of *Pak* Nardi. But one minute later, nothing seems to change.

Several men then carry *Pak* Nardi out of the arena, which is prepared for the wedding celebration the next day. They lay him out unconscious in the living room of Nurman Budiman's house, the father of Emang, the groom of the new wedding couple. While unconsciousness, *Pak* Nardi sometimes seems to want to get up, as if he is fighting or attacking somebody. However *Oom* Din is still beside him, holding his hands and saying words that I can't understand. He prays with a cup of water and opens *Pak* Nardi's mouth to help him swallow a little.

Outside the house, people gossip that *Pak* Nardi is possessed by a devil because he is not an indigenous Galela (*O Galela madutu*). However people also think that his devil is not as strong as the ones they have in Galela. All the people believe that *Pak* Nardi will be all right because they think he must have supernatural powers to protect himself as a foreigner, a Javanese immigrant, in the land of Halmahera.[149] All this time the music continues its incessant beat, pausing only briefly when *Pak* Nardi falls. Other dancers dance and the rhythm of the music fill the bodies of all who are present. Mystery.

Pictures 41-42: *Pak* Nardi and a local man dance the *Cakalele.*

[149] The centres of transmigration in the North Moluccas are localized in the district of Jailolo, Sahu, Bacan and Kao (see Chapter V).

4.1.1. The Spirit of the Ancestors and Evil Spirits

A few days after the party, I asked *Oom* Din about what happened on the night before *the wedding party*. *Oom* Din laughed and said nothing. "It was nothing," *Oom* Din said, apparently wanting to avoid the subject. "*Ibu* had already gone home. About 3 AM *Pak* Nardi returned to consciousness and I took him home to Tiabo in my oxcart." *Oom* Din quickly shifted our talk to another topic.[150] However I persisted and asked him whether they often had events during which someone collapses while dancing the *Cakalele*. *Oom* Din laughed and shook his head. "Never. The Galela are brave people who know how to dance their ancestral dances. We respect our ancestors in the way we live. Our ancestors were sea pirates and when we perform this dance, we honour our ancestors." *Oom* Din explained with enthusiasm.

"Some one who dances the *Cakalele* has to understand truly that this dance is a victory dance. For many generations, we have heard the stories of how our ancestors would go for long sea journeys to hijack ships (*o tohiki*). Before departing they had to have a big party. They danced and drank the local liquor (*saguer, o daluku*) to stimulate their energy and stir up the company of the ancestral spirits (*o dilike*). These are the spirits of those who died long ago." *Oom* Din explained that even now the people from Ngidiho are always chosen to perform the *Cakalele* dance to welcome important government officials who visit Galela.

"Even though we already have *agama* ("religion," which refers to Islam), we are still proud of this inheritance." *Oom* Din went on to explain why *Pak* Nardi was possessed by an evil spirit whereas the Ngidiho dancers were not.[151] He said that if someone from Galela was susceptible to a bad spirit *(o toka)* they would know in themselves that they could not touch the sword and shield during the *Cakalele* dance. It is taboo. Performing *Cakalele* gives honour to the ancestors. Therefore souls of the dancers must be empty and not influenced by evil spirits. Only then can they be refilled with *o dilike*, the good spirits, the spirits of the ancestors.

When the ancestral spirits fill the dancers, all of the audience can feel the presence of the ancient spirits who protect the entire village.[152] Evil spirits, *o toka*, cannot unite with the ancestors, *o dilike*. *O toka* are not the ancestral spirits, but rather destructive spirits that can destroy the lives of human beings. However the ancestral spirits (Galela: *o dilike*; Tobelo: *o dilikine*) protect human beings. "In olden times, before our ancestors departed on a long sea voyage, they called *o dilike* to accompany them," said *Oom* Din.

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[150] *Pak* Nardi danced at 1 am after he led the procession of slaughtering the cow for the next day's party. In the tradition of Galelan somebody who slaughters a cow has a right to take home its head. *Oom* Din gives *Pak* Nardi this task because he can take the head home for consumption by his family. This man, who lives with his wife and a grand son, eats simply everyday.

[151] I don't see that *Oom* Din means that the spirit within *Pak* Nardi is the bad spirit. However, he means that the spirit *o dilike* from the Galela is different from another spirit.

[152] Each family has its ancestral spirits. The spirits of ancestors appear in the form of clan as the reality of the kin-network the Galela have.

"Even now, in the modern world, if a Galelan wants to go on a long journey, they always ask for the protection of *o dilike* in advance," *Oom* Din went on to explain the differences between the ancestral spirits and the bad spirits. "The Galela will only call for help from the spirits (*o dilike*) who are ancestors from their own family. They feel that only the spirits of their own ancestors will really help them in a critical moment especially when they are physically threatened." *Oom* Din then told a story that the youth of Galela who become soldiers are always helped by their own *o dilike* when they are in a dangerous situation and their lives are threatened.

The ancestral spirits, *o dilike*, are different from the village spirits, *o wonge*. *O wonge* are the spirits who protect the village. According to local myths, each village believes that particular animals represent some of their ancestors that they are forbidden to kill (Ishige: 1980). The *o wonge* of Ngidiho is a crocodile (*o gosoma*). Each village has a special *o wonge*. Another village believes that their *o wonge* is an eagle *(o kodoba)* (Ishige: 1980, 420; cf. Chapter I). Using the categories explained by C. Levi-Strauss (Levi-Strauss: 1969) and other authors, the concept of *o wonge* can be classified as their totem animal.

Unlike the Christians, the Muslims of Ngidiho believe that *o dilike* is a good spirit and not a demon or evil spirit. Protestant Christianity, as inherited from the Dutch missionaries, did not believe in good ancestral spirits, but only accepted the reality of Satan (*Iblis*) and evil spirits or demons. The missionaries taught that living people can not communicate with the dead because they are already transformed from the physical world into the spiritual world. This teaching separated the new Christian community from their kin-network. Celebrating the ancestors was a kinship ritual that created solidarity. Among the more Evangelical forms of Christianity the spirit world was affirmed and God was believed to save the ancestors of those who became Christians. Nevertheless, even if there was a belief in good spirits, the Christian teachers stressed that only God should be celebrated and worshiped, not the ancestors. Orthodox Islam also focuses on the celebration of God and forbids the worship of spirits, but Qur'an teaching about *jinn* accommodates local beliefs in spirits.[153]

In light of this background it is easy to see why the *Cakalele* dance is seldom performed at Protestant Christian wedding parties in Galela.[154] As a substitution, they prefer modern style music like disco for the youth and waltz music for the older generation. Dancing the waltz still persists as an inheritance from Dutch missionaries. The *Cakalele* is an indigenous dance created by the Galelans. The dance of *Denge* described in the narration of *the wedding party* is also indigenous, although it was influenced by Malay culture that was passed on from Islamic missionaries (see Chapter II). Sometimes the Muslims of Ngidiho complain that the Christians are not true Galelans because they have forgotten the traditions of their ancestors.

[153] Catholic Christianity was (and still is), more tolerant of local religious rituals that involve the spirits.
[154] cf. Jouwersma: 1985.

According to the Galela, devils, satan, *syaitan* (Arabic), *iblis*, (Galela: *ibilisi*) are bad spirits that eat human beings. Genies (*jinn*) are good spirits that live near human beings.[155] In the original language of the local religion, there was no word for devil or genie (*jinn*). However the idea of good spirits and bad spirits was prominent in the local religion. In the meeting between Muslim teachings and local practices, the concept of devils and *jinn* from the Qur'an were easily assimilated with local concepts. Now the people of Galela differentiate between different kinds of evil spirits in the category of *o toka. O meki*, *o baja-bito* and *o putiana* are all bad spirits or demons *o toka*. There are also a variety of good spirits, including *o goma*, *o dilike*, *o wonge*, *gurumi ma dorou*, *moro* and *honga*, all of which are considered genies (Arabic: *jinn*; Galela: *jinni*), because they don't threaten human beings (cf. Ishige: 1989, 429).[156]

With these accommodations between Islam and indigenous beliefs, a month before *Ramadhan* (the month of fasting), the Muslims of Ngidiho go on a pilgrimage to their family graveyards. They clean them and put flowers on the tombs. If anyone plans to get married, their parents will also go to the ancestral graveyards to pray for security and blessing for the wedding rituals that are being prepared. According to the tradition, if they don't visit the graveyard something strange is bound to occur at the party. For example, perhaps the rice will not turn out well or there may be some kind of accident, etc. The anomaly is a sign that they have proceeded with their plans without involving their ancestors. It makes sense for the Galela to involve their ancestors since the gathering for a wedding party or death ceremony involves the entire village and kin-group, including those who have already passed away.

Picture 43: Villagers visit the family graveyard before they hold a big event, such as a wedding party.

[155] The word *jinn* is Arabic. In Islamic teaching, jinn are considered God's creations since the beginning. They were created along with angels (*malaikat*). *Jinn* have offspring and can die. There are two kinds of *jinn*: good ones and bad ones (*syaitan*). cf. Baker: 1988.

[156] In Java there are *makluk halus* (fine or transparent creatures) who existed before human beings. They are called *danjang*. They occupy particular places and are called "*mbah*" that means grandfather. This shows that the *makluk halus* are conceptually close to their ancestors (*leluhur*).

During my research in Ngidiho I had the opportunity to attend a major funeral ceremony that was held for one of the community leaders in Ngidiho. When somebody dies, all the men in the village have to attend the ceremony and pray together. After the person is buried, the core family, including the wife/husband, sons and son-in-laws, sit around the bed where the person who died is lying at the time of his/her death. For seven days and nights, the men read the *Yasin* scripture from the *Qur'an* and follows with *tahlilan*.[157] On the bed, they put all the personal belongings of the deceased, such as sarongs, shirts, clothes, *peci* (rimless cap), shoes, sandals, books etc. On the seventh day, all the Muslims in the village are invited to attend a *tahlilan* for the grieving family. After reading the book of Yasin and saying confession, all of the personal belongs that are on the bed are distributed to the kin-family. The Christians also come to help with the cooking preparations for the following party. The in-laws from the male line (*doroa*) bring *sago* and fish, while the female line (*modoka*) brings red sticky cake (*wajik*).

Picture 44: Some villagers are chanting from the *Qur'an* after a funeral in Ngidiho. In the background you can see the clothes of the dead person lying on the bed.

The practices of local religion are still apparent in the ceremony of *tahlilan* seven days after a death, even though the ritual has been Islamicized. According to indigenous beliefs, some one who dies has to be treated carefully so that her/his body can be transformed into an *o goma* or ancestral spirit. The transformation of a corpse into an *o goma* is determined by material conditions that must be provided by the living family who remain on earth. After reaching the stage of *o goma*, a dead person may be transformed again to become an *o dilike*. This transformation is very important to the Galela. According to them, only indigenous Galelans (*o Galela ma dutu*), can be transformed into *o dilike*.

[157] In Indonesia, Muslims always read this letter at the time of a death. It is assumed that reading the passage from Yasin helps the human spirit to be separated easily from her/his body. A second reason is to request the forgiveness from God for the death person.

Foreigners, such as Europeans, Sangerese, Arabs, Ambonese, or Javanese, cannot be transformed after death into *o goma* because they are not native (Ishige: 1980, 419). Someone of mixed blood due to intermarriage can become *o goma* when they die, though they are unlikely to make the further transition to *o dilike.*

In the past, the living family could help the transformation process by fulfilling certain duties. First, they should bury the coffin together with all the personal belongings of the person. This would give the dead person a feeling of security for their journey to reach their transformation into *o goma*. Secondly, during the period of the journey, that lasts approximately seven days, the family should make ritual food offerings and invite the dead person to eat them.[158] The presence of the entire family at the death ritual will help the transformation from a body to become spirit. If the ceremonies are not carried out properly, then the *o goma* may be transformed into a bad spirit or *o toka.*

In Ngidiho, the requirement that males be involved in the death ritual is influenced by Islam. Islamic teaching regards only men as *wali* or representatives of the Prophet Muhammad SAW in their families and in society at large. This has an impact on views of illegitimate children, since a baby born to a single mother, without having a legal father by Islamic marriage, cannot become a *wali* and is called proscribed (*haram*). If the baby is a boy, then he will not be allowed to function as an *imam* (religious leader) when he grows up. Islam also changed the practice of burying all a persons belongings with the coffin. Instead, the Galelans distribute the belongings to the family of the deceased after they have been laid out on the deathbed for seven days. This follows the Islamic teaching in the *Qur'an* that a dead person's belongings should be distributed to his or her family. However Islamic practices in Ngidiho still follow the old traditions in which the family shows their appreciation for the dead person by holding seven days of prayer to help the transformation of the person's spirit to become a good spirit (*o dilike*).

According to Islam, only a man may become an *imam.* In contrast, in the old religion of Galela, both women and men served as religious leaders without being distinguished by gender. In olden times, healers, or shamans were also considered religious leaders. However in present day Ngidiho, healers such as *Oom* Din or the mother of the bride in the story of *the wedding party*, must be very careful not

[158] This ritual practice is found also in the Javanese tradition (See Geertz: 1976). If people die then their families hold thanksgiving prayers after seven days, 100 days and 1000 days. This tradition is still practiced even by Muslims. There is no evidence to prove why the memorial of the dead is conducted after 7 days, 100 days and 1000 days. But my data suggests that the time periods may correlate with the time needed to prepare hospitality for those who attend the ritual gatherings. The stock of food supplies for a family gathering is availaible for up to seven days. Then people need to wait for their chickens to grow for 100 days. Their cows may be ready to slaughter within 1000 days. Economical reasons are formulated into spiritual meanings. This tradition was also influenced by the former religion (Hinduism) before people embracing their new religion. Leonard Andaya quotes Peter Bellwood, a historian of pre-historic Papua New Guinea, and states that the evidence of rice barn and rice pestle found around Papua New Guinea and also in the Moluccas were related to the expansion of Hinduism in the area through the spice trade (Andaya: 1993a, 50).

to appear as rivals to orthodox Islamic teachers (see Chapter III).[159] Galelan Muslims still maintain their old traditions but they have modified their ideas and practices to adjust them to their new religion.

4.1.2. Our Ancestors were Pirates

"Our ancestors were sea-pirates!" I was astonished to hear this statement made with obvious pride and without embarrassment or guilt. Not only the Galelans are proud of their ancestor's piracy. The people of Kao and Tobelo also speak with pride of their heritage as the descendants of sea pirates. According to Djurubasa, the Tobelo do not have any taboo against speaking of their ancestors' profession as sea-pirates (*yo tohiki*) (Djurubasa: 2000, 139). As an ethnographer, I wondered why everywhere in North Halmahera, on the Eastern side of Ternate and Tidore, people say proudly that their ancestors were sea-pirates. What are the connections between war dances, sea pirates and the feelings of pride that remain in the society of Northern Halmahera?

I discussed this question with *Oom* Din. He laughed and said: "*Ibu*, this relates to our self-esteem. Our ancestors proved that they were not just little people whom the big people could push around!" Then he explained how the ancestors of Galela pirated as far away as Ceram and Timor.[160] "Who were the big people?" I asked, still feeling surprised. "Oh, those who sailed on the ocean, they were traders." I listened with amazement to *Oom* Din's stories about his ancestors.

However, I still didn't fully understand *Oom* Din's pride in his sea-pirate ancestors. How did piracy against the shipping trade on the high seas during the $17^{th} - 19^{th}$ centuries influence the cultural heritage of the people on the Eastern side of Halmahera? Why did they still maintain the memory in their rituals and practices? Clearly, *Oom* Din could not explain in detail how or why his ancestors became pirates. However he was quite sure that becoming sea pirates was a sign that his ancestors were not small people.

The Galelans' pride in their ancestors is built from their substantial awareness that piracy requires great bravery. They believe it is a sign that they are not a defeated people. The Galelans are a great people because their ancestors dared to go far and returned in victory. They celebrated their victories with huge parties. The *Cakalele* dance was the centre of their welcoming party to celebrate the safe return home of their sons and husbands, who came in joy, bringing wealth and victory.

In the current *Cakalele* dance, the people decorate their shields with mother of pearl shells that show how many heads of their enemies were cut off by their ancestors. According to A. Hueting as quoted by Platenkamp, among the Tobelo

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[159] Christian communities experience a similar tension. *Adat* leaders and shamans in most of Indonesia must be careful not to offend the local Christian ministers and priests. Hibba Abugideiri writes an interesting article about how Muslim women in the USA reinterpret the Islamic tradition so that their role in religious leaderships also changes (Abugideiri: 2001). See also (Wadud: 1999).
[160] (Valeri: 2000, 28, 422: n76).

and Tobaru people of earlier times, the decorations on their shields, that appear like the eyes of human beings, were made from porcelain or mother-of-pearl (Platenkamp: 1988, 201). Spears, shields and swords used to be given as gifts from the groom's family to the bride's family. These gifts had to be followed by a purifying ritual. The gifts showed the people's pride in their past, but also their need to purify the past, so that the sins of their ancestors would not be carried on by the new generation. The purifying ritual was meant to remove the fears of the bride's family who were giving their daughter in marriage to a man who was a descendent of sea-pirates. The mother of the groom played the primary role in purifying the gifts, which her son gave to his bride's family. The mother covered the gifts with her old clothes. By doing so, she removed the fears of the bride's family.

Traditionally, before the groom's family gave the shield, the father of the groom took the role of a *soda* and danced the *Cakalele*. A sister of the bride accompanied the man as a *sisi* in the dance. The rest of the bride's family would dance the *Cakalele* after they received the gifts. The cloth covering of the gifts would then be removed and the father of the bride would dance with the cloth, continuing to dance as a *soda* with the bride's sister as a *sisi* (Platenkamp: 1988).

In the past, besides *fongu*, the groom's family also had to give Chinese porcelain, batik clothes and white clothes to the mother of the bride. The batik clothes were to reward the bride's mother for her breast-milk because she nursed and raised her daughter, the bride. The white clothes were given for later use as a shroud for the mother when she died.[161] The antique porcelain plates were intended to reward the father of the bride for his protection of his daughter. Antique Chinese plates demonstrated the bravery of the groom's family because these rare items were only available as the fruit of a successful pirating excursion against the maritime trade.

These traditions were still practiced in Galela when I was doing fieldwork there in 1999. When the Banana Company cleared out the tombs of the ancient graveyard in order to clear them for banana fields, they uncovered further confirmation of these death and exchange rituals. On the other hand, according to the records left by the Dutch missionaries, the new Christians were prohibited from following the death rituals of their former religion.[162]

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[161] These white clothes show the influence of Islam because at the beginning, the Galelans only buried by covering the body with mats provided by the *modoka* (see Chapter III). In the current situation, although the Galelan corpses are covered with the white clothes, the community also puts a piece of board that is covered by a mat, which is a gift from the *modoka*. After that the corpses are covered again with mats before soil fills in the hole, cf. Ishige: 1980, 385ff.

[162] cf. *Peraturan adat orang Kristen dan peraturan Sipil di Halmahera 1906-1927* (The *adat* regulation of the Christian people and the civil regulation in Halmahera 1906-1927). If somebody died in their family, their house and the entire belongings had to be left behind so that the spirit of the dead would not be jealous. The family would just leave the corpse on the drying rack along with the entire possessions of the person. The Dutch missionaries changed this by putting the corpse in a coffin and burying it. However during the time of the preparation the tradition to fill the coffin with the belongings of the death person was still carried out. The Islamic teachings modified the tradition of Galela and formed a new meaning that relates to their religion.

The explanations we have constructed so far, concerning the ritual connections between the ancestors' profession as sea pirates and the current identity and practices of the Galela are too incomplete to be satisfying. How may we understand the symbolic meanings expressed by *Oom* Din, especially in relation to the original context when the Galelan ancestors became sea-pirates? Perhaps *Oom* Din's explanation suggests an "anti-centre" or "anti-hegemonic" discourse. However who were the centres? In the following section I will describe how historical events gave rise to economic and ritual practices that are still influential in the society of Ngidiho. This is a history of the oppression of the weak.

4.2. Spice Islands and the Process of Modernization

There are connections between social and historical changes that occurred hundreds or even thousands of years ago, and the transformations in social culture that happened in the North Moluccas during and after the violence of 1999-2000.

4.2.1. The Rise and Fall of *Maluku-Kie-Raha*

Cloves in the North and nutmeg and mace in the Centre (especially the islands of Banda) were both a blessing and a curse for the Moluccas.[163] Ever since the Roman Empire, spices have been in great demand. In ancient times, spices were used for the preservation of food, as well as to make perfume and soap. According to I. Innes Miller, in the 6th Century BCE doctors such as Alexander of Thalles and Paul from the Aegean used cloves to cure rheumatism, stimulate the appetite and relieve seasickness (Miller: 1969, 49). In India, a surgeon in the 1st Century CE named Charaka used cloves as a medicine after operations. The name of cloves is already mentioned in the book of the Ramayana that was written in India around 200 BCE. Spices were part of an ancient trade network, linked by the Silk Route that was controlled by Chinese and Indian traders (Miller: 1969, 49).

In about 500 CE, two powerful empires, namely the Persian and the Eastern Roman (Byzantium) Empires, competed to control the trade routes from East to West. The conflict became greater when religions were used as a means to extend the trade territories of each powerful party (Lewis: 1995, 37-39). Ideological conflict between the Zoroastrians from Persia and the Christians of the Eastern Roman Empire shut down the trade routes between East and West because traders could not pass through regions that were in conflict, or controlled by followers of their rival religion (Simon: 1989, 9). Because of that, the trade route moved to the Arabian Peninsula because the "incense-route" was already part of the trade through Mecca (Simon: 1989, 27; Lewis: 1995, 46).[164]

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[163] In the trade history there are two famous names for cloves. First *chengkeh* (Sanskrit that perhaps comes from Chinese script) and the second was *lawang* that has the same meaning as *lavanga* (clove flowers) (Miller: 1964, 48). "The North" included Ternate, Tidore, Moti, Makian and Bacan (Miller: 1969, 48). The word *pala* (nutmeg) comes from Sanskrit, *jati-phala* or *pala,* in Malay as *'pala'* (Miller: 1969, 58). In Latin mace is known as *maccis* (Miller: 1969, 58).

[164] The removal of the trade lane was undertaken by Byzantium to avoid regions that were controlled by Persia (Iran). Persia controlled the Indian Ocean where the incense route was controlled by Himyarite Yemen (Simon: 1989, 33).

Before Islam arrived in the Moluccas, Indian and Chinese traders had already sailed to Java to buy spices from the Moluccas. The Moluccas were the original "spice islands". The origin word of the name *Maluku* (English: the Moluccas) is still a subject of controversy.[165] Frans Watuseke argues that the word *Maluku* (the Moluccas) derives from the word for mountain (*maloko*) in the language of Galela and Tobelo. This explanation tallies well with my explanation of the historical background of *Maluku-Kie-Raha.*[166]

The rise of Islam began in the middle of the 7th Century CE and quickly spread to the regions that were related to Arabic trade routes, such as Southern India in the 8th Century CE (Crone: 1987, 9). At that time there were several Hindus kingdoms in Java and Sumatra, such as Sriwijaya, whose power spread to the Malay Peninsula. The Hindu Kingdoms in India had a close relationship with Hindu Kingdoms in Java and Sumatra. According to one theory, Sufis converted the Malay regions to Islam from Gujarat, India. They communicated a form of Islam that accommodated local beliefs and practices (Andaya and Andaya: 1982, 53). Arabic traders from Gujarat began to move directly into the Eastern spice trade during the 9th Century CE (Andaya and Andaya: 1982, 51). However traders from China, India and Java, who were subject to the Hindu Kingdoms of Java, already controlled the region. Chinese and Indian traders were brokers of spices from Javanese traders to the West. M.C. Ricklefs says that the trade relationships worked well among the early traders without differentiating their religious backgrounds (Ricklefs: 1993 [1981], 8).

A new Malay kingdom was founded in 1402. In the middle of the 15th Century, the last Majapahit Hindu Kingdom in East Java collapsed because of an attack from the Malays, a new state that had a Muslim king. After the traders cut their relationship with the Majapahit Kingdom, many small traders converted to Islam with the hope that they could increase their trade links with the prosperous Islamic Kingdoms (Sardesai: 1989, 54). At the peak of its power in the 15th Century CE, the Malay culture spread to entire regions that had been under Sriwijaya and Majapahit. The spread of Malay language from Aceh to Ternate is vivid testimony to the success of the Malay Kingdom (Andaya and Andaya: 1982, 54).

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[165] Historians such as M. C. Ricklefs assume that the name Maluku is related to the Arabic word *Jazirat al-Muluk*, that is 'the islands of Kings' (Ricklefs: 1993 [1981], 24). Both Ricklefs and Hall used the definition made up by L. C. Damais (see Watuseke: 1977, 307; Ricklefs: 1993 [1981], 310). However Frans Watuseke follows the linguistic work of H. Blink who assumes that the word Maluku has its origin from a local word. The local "Maluku" is closer to the word *"maloko"* (Galela and Tobelo) that means 'mountain'. Looking from the direction of Halmahera, Ternate, Tidore and other islands are like mountains springing out of the ocean. The word *Maloko* was found in the book of Negarakertagama written by a Hindu author, Mpu Prapanca, in 1365 CE. It shows the same word that appears in the Portuguese language, *Malucco* or Maluku. The change of 'o' to become 'u' appears often in the linguistic group in the North Moluccas and Halmahera. Therefore the word "Maloko" became "Moloko"; Maluku shows the linguistic process, which is related to the context where the word is used (Watuseke: 1977, 308). See also (van Fraassen: 1990, 1), (Lapian: 1990, 1).

[166] See the further explanation below.

Since the spice trade was now controlled by Muslim kingdoms in Java, the kings in the Moluccas who were involved with the spice trade converted to Islam.[167] Javanese, Muslim traders from Gresik and Tuban converted the kings in the Moluccas to Islam even earlier than the Javanese kingdom in the hinterland (Ricklefs: 1993 [1981]). By converting to Islam they ensured that they could sell cloves to the Sultan of Malay (cf. Meilink-Roelofsz: 1962, 154). They changed their traditional titles from *kolano* to Sultan as evidence of their conversion to Islam. The use of this title gave a sign to the world that they were part of the *Ummah*, the brotherhood of Muslims throughout the world, which included the Ottoman Sultan and the Mughul Sultan (India) (Andaya and Andaya: 1982, 53). The Malay preachers of Islam used the idea of kinship to attract the kings to convert to Islam (Andaya and Andaya: 1982). Conversion to Islam brought many trade benefits. In the 16th Century traders and kings sought trade links with people from the same religion.

When someone converts to Islam, it is sometimes referred to as "entering Malay" (*masuk Melayu*) (Andaya and Andaya: 1982, 55). The Malay Sultanate had economic and military power. Those who wanted to benefit from a relationship with it had to accept Malay religion and culture, even though they could continue with their traditional rituals and practices. In 1486, Djainal Abidin, the Sultan of Ternate began to use the title of Sultan in order to demonstrate the reality of his conversion (Haire: 1981, 91).

According to Naidah in 1322 the islands near Halmahera were divided into four kingdoms. These kingdoms were Ternate, Tidore, Bacan and Jailolo (Naidah quoted from Balwin: 1993, 46; Andili: 1980). Baab Mansur Malamo founded his kingdom in 1257. At that time, the title of *kolano* was adopted from the Javanese language as a term of address to a nobleman. *Raja* (which now means King) was a title from India that was used to address a noblewoman (Jacobs: 1971, 103). It is interesting to see how the change of title from *Kolano* to Sultan fits into the bigger political context. Why did Djainal Abidin begin to use the title Sultan in 1486? According to Ricklefs, Muslim traders were already operating in the territory of "Indonesia" hundreds of years before the arrival of Western traders. If so, why did it take so long before conversions in the local kingdoms began happening in the 15th Century, especially since the rise of Islam in the Malay Kingdom began in 1402 (Ricklefs: 1993 [1981], 8). The answer to this question is directly related to control of the world trade routes after the victory of the Ottoman Empire over the East Roman Empire (Byzantine) in 1453.[168]

In 1511, Portugal conquered the strategic port town of Malacca on the Malay Peninsula. This brought her directly to the Moluccas in 1512 (Andaya: 1993a, 116). Portugal could subjugate Malacca because in 1510 Afonso de Albuquerque had captured Goa (Scammel: 1981, 238). This transformed the trade networks.

[167] M. Jacobs notes that before the European arrived in the Moluccas, in the Maluku Sea the Persian and Arabic traders already sailed (Jacobs: 1971, 83).
[168] cf. Ricklefs: 1993 [1981], 22.

The kingdoms in the region welcomed the arrival of Portugal in the North Moluccas because they offered higher prices for buying spices than the Javanese traders (Meilink-Roelofsz: 1962, 155). According to one source, at the time, Javanese traders had decreased their purchase of spices, so the arrival of Portugal was especially welcomed by the kingdoms in the North Moluccas. Tujimah reports that when Portugal began to open their network in the Moluccas, the Sultan of Ternate didn't want to engage in business with him because they were of a different religion (Tujimah: 1971,4). Therefore it is interesting to question why the North Moluccans then accepted Portugal. Evidently economic interests were stronger than religious ties. Another historian reports that the kingdoms in the North Moluccas frequently violated the trade agreements, which stipulated that they should only trade with Muslims (Meilink-Roelofsz: 1962,154).

Competition between the rival Sultans in the Moluccas also influenced the forming and reforming of new trade coalitions. Portugal built a trade network with the Sultan of Ternate who controlled the spice trade at the time. Ternate's partnership with the Portuguese delegation led by Francisco Serrão, shows that they dominated the competition between the local kingdoms of the area (Lapian: 1990, 2). However Magellan's expedition from Spain soon arrived in the North Moluccas and built a rival trade coalition with the Sultan of Tidore (Andaya: 1993a, 116). The Sultan of Jailolo also built a trade partnership with Spain. However the Sultan of Bacan used Portugal as a means to attack Ternate.

The Sultan of Bacan proved his commitment to Portugal by converting to Catholicism. Bacan became one of the centres for the Portuguese Catholic Church in the 16th century. However the Sultan of Ternate, Hairun, killed the Sultan of Bacan and all of his offspring (Lapian: 1990, 8). Small Islamic kingdoms in Eastern Halmahera, like Morotia and Morotai used the shifting presence of Portugal to join the attack on the powerful Sultanate of Ternate. Some of the smaller kingdoms converted from Islam to Christianity as a sign of their rebellion against the great power of Ternate. In those days, many of the other islands in the area felt oppressed by Ternate.

The trade coalition between Jailolo and Spain threatened the interests of Ternate and Portugal. Jailolo's antipathy towards Portugal took the form of violent oppression of local people who became Catholics. This sparked the anger of Portugal who then attacked Jailolo. In 1551, Jailolo collapsed (Andaya: 1993a, 130). The Ternate Sultanate sided with Portugal and the ensuing war annihilated the Kingdom of Jailolo. Ternate ordered the burning of the palace and forced the Jailolo Sultan to give up his title. However Ternate permitted the former Sultan to use the title *Sangaji*, which carries a lower status than Sultan. The title of *Sangaji* shows that Jailolo was directly under the Sultan of Ternate and was also a servant of the King of Portugal (Andaya: 1993a, 130). Some of the Jailolo *Sangaji's* offspring later immigrated to the island of Ceram while others spread out over the land of Halmahera.

According to Lapian, after the annihilation of the Jailolo Sultanate in 1551, the remaining powers moved to create a lasting federation called *Maluku-Kie-Raha* (Lapian: 1990, 9). *Maluku-Kie-Raha* means 'four mountains', all of which can be seen from the island of Halmahera. The four mountains, listed by their locations from South to North are: Makian, Moti, Tidore and Ternate (Lapian: 1990, 9). According to local traditions, clove trees grew first on Makian island. The legendary king, Jafar Sadek, had four sons who ruled the four volcanic islands. Jafar Sadeik's first son ruled the island of Makian (Lapian: 1990, 2, 7). The three younger brothers ruled over the islands of Moti, Tidore and Ternate. The youngest son of Jafar Sadek ruled Ternate. This myth suggests that in the beginning *Maluku-Kie-Raha* included a hierarchy of kings that were geographically listed from South to North, i.e., Makian, Moti, Tidore and Ternate (van Fraassen: 1987, 26). There was no mention of the recently destroyed kingdoms of Bacan and Jailolo. However, volcanic eruptions in the islands forced the Makian ruler to move to Bacan while his brother in Moti moved to Jailolo. After their resettlement, the descendants of the royal families from Makian and Moti united with the remnants of Bacan and Jailolo and continued their struggle to retrieve the royal prerogatives that they had lost to Ternate.

Lapian doesn't explain how or why *Maluku-Kie-Raha*, was created. What was the function of this ideology of a united kingdom, especially in light of its creation after the fall of the Kingdom of Jailolo? Who created the idiom: Jailolo or Ternate? Lapian states:

> The story of Jafar Sadek prevalent in North Moluccan tales of its early history should also be seen in the context of this tradition about a stranded ship from abroad, fraught with cargo, the beginning of a flourishing trade which was based on its clove production. Although the principle of *Maluku-Kie-Raha* was upheld, in actual fact only Ternate and Tidore prospered during this new era of commercial resurgence (Lapian: 1990, 10).

However, the tale of the creation of *Maluku-Kie-Raha* has greater significance than is suggested by Lapian. The mythology of a united kingdom strengthened the identity and pride of the people in Halmahera, from ancient times until the present. In those days, the island of Halmahera was called Jailolo (*Gilolo*). But it remains to be seen how these ancient tales and names are linked with the political struggle to recover the existence of the Jailolo kingdom. Ternate was the centre of commercial clove trade during the era of Portugal and the Netherlands. It makes sense to assume that the tale of *Maluku-Kie-Raha* was created by Ternate to reassure the remaining kingdoms after the demise of Bacan and Jailolo, and to bolster unity among the kingdoms in order to regain control of the trade routes after Portugal withdrew from the region.

The geopolitical position of Ternate didn't change after Portugal left the Moluccas. However the concept of *Maluku-Kie-Raha* was an ideological tool to bolster the legitimacy of Ternate and justify the extension of its power. A new

relationship was built between Ternate and the Dutch traders. Ternate was clearly the leader of the remaining four Sultans in the Moluccas. The hierarchy of power was now the reverse of the ancient mythology. Now the hierarchy was from North to South: Ternate, Tidore, Bacan/Makian and Jailolo/Moti (van Fraassen: 1987, 25).

In spite of the political realities, the tradition that the first-born child of the original king (Jafar Sadek) should have pre-eminence in the kingdoms of the North Moluccas is still influential. In the 19th Century a man named Nuku claimed to be the legitimate heir of the Jailolo Sultan who remained in Tidore. He led a struggle against Ternate. The name Nuku means "The Carrier of Blessing" (*Pembawa Berkat*). He led a movement that was supported by the British colonial government and appointed Sultan of Tidore. Under the rule of Nuku, an offspring of Makian was chosen to become the Sultan of Jailolo (Lapian: 1990, 9). Later in the 19th century, a man named Dabu Abu Hasan, who lived on the island of Ceram, claimed to be the legitimate heir of the Sultan of Jailolo. He succeeded in uniting the people of Halmahera to attack the Sultan of Ternate, however his movement ultimately failed because the Dutch missionary, van Dijken and the colonial government refused to support him (van Baarda: 1995 [1905]; Magany: 1984, 99).

In Chapter V we will see how the idiom of *Maluku-Kie-Raha* reappeared in 1999. After the violence of 1999-2000, the politics of *Maluku-Kie-Raha* were used to resurrect the ancient Jailolo Sultanate.

4.2.2. Religions as New Loyalties

In this sub section, I will discuss how rulers used ritual as a political means to build new loyalties. Medieval cultural politics shaped the trade motives of Portugal and Spain.[169] At the end of the 15th Century, Spain was just recovering from a civil war. However Portugal was already a sea power embarking on worldwide exploration. The 15th Century was known as the Year of Invention in Portugal (Andaya and Andaya: 1982, 55). The main motivation for Portuguese expansion was trade. The Portuguese were searching for a sea route to the Asian spice trade, since spices were at that time worth many times their weight in gold (Andaya and Andaya: 1982, 55). The Portuguese journey to the East proved that Asia was indeed closer to the European continent than had been thought (Scammel: 1981). Catholic monasteries in Lisbon carried out the scholarly research and preparations to find a sea route to Asia. Therefore it is not surprising that Catholic pastors accompanied the ships on their voyage to the East.

During the colonial era, trade and religion were interwoven. The Muslim Sultans of Ternate and Tidore were suspicious of the Catholic Portuguese traders. The palaces tolerated the trade activities of the Portugal but they feared the religious influence of the traders and priests, especially as they spread their religion among

[169] Portugal and Spain were united as a single country in 1589 (Andaya: 1993a, 137).

the local people who were subjects of the Sultans. Their fears increased when several members of the royal families in Ternate, Jailolo and Bacan converted to become Catholics.

Sultan Hairun of Ternate was concerned that the religious conversions might threaten the loyalty and obedience of his subjects. Andaya writes that Sultan Hairun complained to Galvão, the Portuguese Governor about those who converted to become Catholics. He claimed that they no longer obeyed him or accepted his instructions (Andaya: 1993a, 125). However, Sultan Hairun could not do anything since the Portuguese also had a religious mission.

The Portuguese planned to install Tabarija, the stepbrother of Hairun, as the new Sultan of Ternate, to replace Hairun. Tabarija was a Catholic. However the plan failed because Hairun poisoned his stepbrother and he died in Malacca on June 30, 1545 (Andaya: 1993a, 125). Portugal did not have any good reason to reject Hairun as the Sultan of Ternate. Portugal respected Hairun because of his attitude, which was open-minded even though he was a pious Muslim. Hairun even sent his son Baabullah to study at the Jesuit College in Goa, India.

Nevertheless Portugal soon began to show a lack of respect for the local rulers. The Portuguese Governor in Ternate, Duarte de Sã treated Hairun rudely (Andaya: 1993a, 131). De Sã had just begun his new task in Ternate. He took over the harvest of cloves in Makian Island that was supposedly the right of the Sultan of Ternate. He also refused to guarantee the security of the Ternate people who harvested the cloves. Ternate could not accept de Sã's attitude and asked for help from the Sultan of Tidore to attack Portugal. Facing these new challenges, de Sã tried to embrace *Sangaji* Gujarati who was the leader of Jailolo. De Sã promised to give back the title of Sultan to Jailolo and free him from the duty to obey the commands of Portugal. The *Sangaji* accepted this offer and for a short period of time he again used his old title of Sultan (Andaya: 1993a, 131).

On February 28, 1570, Captain Diego Lopes de Mezquita gave a command to kill Sultan Hairun at a dinner party. He was executed by treachery in the Portuguese fortress (Andaya: 1993a, 132). The murder of Hairun brought disaster to Portugal. Under the leadership of Sultan Baabullah, Hairun's son, Ternate became committed to driving Portugal out of the North Moluccas. The war between Ternate and Portugal went on for 14 years at great cost to both sides. But in the end, Portugal was forced to leave the Moluccas in 1605.

The war against Portugal extended into the Central Moluccas. The Dutch traders (*Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie*=VOC) had already arrived in the region of Hitu, an island under the control of the Sultan of Ternate, which was a gathering place for spice traders from Java and Makasar (South Sulawesi). The harbour of Hitu was the central market for clove collectors from Buru and Ceram Islands and for traders in nutmeg and mace from the Islands of Banda. The Portuguese had initiated the planting of cloves in Buru. According to Nunailaita, VOC traders banded together with Muslim traders to attack the Portuguese at Hitu in 1599 (Nunalaita: 1966, 24).

The Portuguese was active in the Moluccas for about a hundred years. Their presence created new social structures and inspired cultural practices that are still apparent in the modern era. Many regions of the Moluccas, such as Mamuya (in Northern Halmahera) and the island of Morotai still show Portuguese influences. In the Central Moluccas, the city of Ambon became the centre of Catholicism. During the war against Portugal religion played a part. The Muslims united with the Calvinist Dutch to drive out the Catholics. Historical accounts record that the war killed many Catholics.

Efforts to end the war included several treaties that were signed before the Portuguese left the region. For example, a treaty was signed to protect the indigenous Catholics, who remained in Ambon. It is possible that during this period of civil war, the Ambonese developed the ritual of *pela* in which Muslim and Christian villages vow to defend each other. However research on this subject is not yet conclusive. Leirissa shows that the people reinvented *pela* in the interests of social unity. According to Leirissa, the term *pela* comes from the region of Leitimor (Ambon), and formalizes relationships that already were strong among the Captains in the Moluccas, long before the colonial period (Leirissa: 1983, 7). Dieter Bartels examines the genealogy of *pela* relationships using an ethno-historical approach. He concludes that the people in the Central Moluccas built *pela* relationships to defend their unity against outside attack (Bartels: 1977).

Pela is a family bond that is established through vows that are declared between villages. The word *pela* means, "finish" or "solve". According to Leirissa, the early meaning of *pela* relates directly to the process of settling a dispute between two Captains who were hostile towards each other. *Pela* is divided into several types (see Bartels: 1977, Leirissa: 1983). For example blood *pela* mixes the physical blood of the participants and creates a very close family bond similar to adoption. Betelnut (*sirih pinang) pela*, creates a more distant family bond. The two parties eat betel nut (*sirih*), acreca nut (*pinang)* and lime (*kapur*) together. They eat from the same plate to show their new family relationship.

One of the basic principles of *pela* is to proscribe marriage between people of villages who are tied with the *pela* bond. This is an incest taboo, since villages with a *pela* relationship are considered members of the same blood family. The prohibition of marriage is applied regardless of the religions of the participants. P*ela* extends family relationships beyond conventional kinship ties and builds social solidarity through rituals of exchange that reguire each party to contribute services or materials and physical support to their pela partners. The ritual of *pela* is only practiced in the Central Moluccas.

Before finally leaving the Moluccas, the Portuguese took temporary refugees in the kingdom of Tidore. Tidore invited Portugal for political reasons, because of the tensions between Ternate and Portugal. Tidore and Ternate were still rivals for power. Ternate saw Tidore's alliance with Portugal as a new obstacle against reaching its ambition to achieve a monopoly over maritime trading in the area. Portugal made use of the competition between Tidore and Ternate.

The arrival of the VOC in the Moluccas coincided with the tension between Ternate and Portugal. Ternate benefited from the religious differences between the Protestant Dutch and the Catholic Portuguese. The Sultan of Ternate and the VOC wanted to evict Portugal from the area in order to set up a new trading network of spices from the Moluccas to the European market. According to Peter Boschberg the eviction of Portugal from territorial trade in the Netherlands Indies was regulated formally in a legal paper of the VOC. The Netherlands considered Portugal an enemy of the state (Boscherg: 2002). J.J. van Klaveren states that during the Portuguese empire, Dutch traders bought spices directly from the Portuguese King in Lisbon (van Klaveren: 1953, 37). However the two centres for Portuguese trading in Asia were in Goa (India) and Malacca (Malaya) (Boscherg: 2002). The Dutch created the VOC in 1602 after the British set up the CCE (Chartered Company for the East) in 1600 (van Klaveren: 1953, 37). Therefore Ternate had no trouble establishing a partnership with the VOC traders to attack the remaining Portuguese survivors who were harboured in Tidore. Ternate could see that the Dutch had better shipping technology and armaments than the Portuguese. Making allies with the Netherlands was easier than squandering all of the Sultan's wealth in a costly war with Portugal.

In the 17th Century, the war in the Moluccan Sea was just between the Dutch traders and the Portuguese traders. Ternate gave an ultimatum to the VOC that they must avoid a direct war with the Sultan of Tidore because Ternate still wanted to build an alliance with Tidore. The target of attack was only the Portuguese, not the Tidorenese civilians. This ultimatum not only prevented open war between Ternate and Tidore, but also benefited the VOC. At the end of the fighting, the VOC claimed to be the protector of the Sultan of Tidore. Therefore, after the collapse of Portugal, both Ternate and Tidore became allies of the VOC traders. This became a pattern for VOC activities. Before the VOC engaged in a conflict to help one kingdom against another, it would first lay out an agreement or treaty that gave benefits to the Netherlands.[170]

4.2.3. De-mythologizing Local Power

In the beginning of the 17th Century, the flag of the VOC waved over the land of the Moluccas. VOC traders built their trading relations with the Sultan of Ternate in two ways. First, the VOC avoided the mistakes of the Portuguese by downplaying the difference of religion. Since the VOC was mainly interested in trade, they discouraged Christian evangelism and emphasized the separation of church and state. Nevertheless they maintained a close relationship with the Christian Ambonese. Secondly, the VOC moved the centre of economic power from the North to the Central Moluccas (Ambon). Since they could not control the Sultan of Ternate and his brothers, they avoided confrontation by establishing a

[170] See Nanulaitta: 1966, 102. Nanulaitta gives an example of the treaty between the VOC and king of Banten.

new centre. Simplifying the old structures of the local government continued this process.

The policy of VOC to separate religion from politics in the Moluccas, was related to similar policies being tried in the Netherlands. In contrast, Ternate strengthened her position by using a combination of religion, charisma and economic incentives to gain help from Javanese and Makasar traders. Ternate appealed to Islamic brotherhood to strengthen solidarity and disguise her ambition to control the spice trade after the departure of Portugal.

Separation of religion and politics was consistent with the changing social context of the Netherlands at the end of the 16th Century. The spirit of Calvinism had already transformed the Netherlands from a fishery region into a Republic and a powerful centre of trade. The Dutch took over the trade roles of the Baltic traders like the Portuguese and Spanish (see Andaya: 1993a, 40). Several cities in Holland, like Amsterdam, became the meeting points for many people with different ethnic and religious beliefs. Relative to the rest of Europe, the Netherlands was one of the most tolerant countries towards religious diversity.

The VOC introduced the politics of *hongi* following the power shift from the North to the Centre of the Moluccan Isles. On July 31, 1652, Sultan Mandar from Ternate signed a treaty with the VOC to destroy their clove trees (Andaya: 1993a, 167). In the treaty, the VOC agreed to pay compensation to the Sultan of about Fl. 12,000. plus Fl. 500 to his "Prime Minister," Kaicili Kalamata and Fl. 1,500 to be divided by the *bobata-bobata* (lower leaders of the Sultan) (Andaya: 1993a, 167, 201). The politics of *hongi* was the policy to cut down all of the clove trees, including the roots of the trees, in exchange for payment from the VOC. The VOC claimed that this was necessary in order to maintain the stability of clove prices in the world market. However this justification concealed the larger purpose of destroying Ternate's control of cloves. While the Dutch destroyed cloves in the North, they planted clove trees in the Central Moluccas, around the Lease Isles. Within 10 years, clove trees already had spread all over the Central Moluccas.

The VOC also controlled the right of the Sultan of Ternate to collect taxes. The Sultan had the right of taxation over several areas in the Central Moluccas, such as the islands of Buru and Ceram, which Ternate claimed as part of her territory. The 9th Sultan of Ternate, who was named Sultan Amsterdam, began to collect taxes (or tribute) in the form of crops, in 1675 (de Jongh: 1909, 756). However the VOC collected taxes from anyone who sold their spices and other crops to the company. Therefore the VOC monopolized the entire region of the Moluccas. The employees of the VOC reached directly into the villages, which produced cloves to buy their crops at standardized prices.

During this period, the power of the VOC was already rooted in Java. They built Batavia (Jakarta) as a haven that was free from the claims of the Javanese Kingdoms (Ricklefs: 1993 [1981]). Batavia became the centre for trade from Eastern regions like Banda, Ternate, Ambon and Makasar. VOC ships carried their cargos of spices from Batavia to Amsterdam, passing Japan. The VOC also

controlled rice trading in Java. In Japan, the VOC started a business in trading sea cucumbers and other cargos from Indonesia (van Gulik: 2000). The traders employed troops of Japanese samurai warriors as security troops on the VOC ships (Mangunwijaya: 1987). VOC ships carried raw materials from the East Indies to the Netherlands, returning to the East Indies with trade ready products from the new industries in Amsterdam and Zeeland. They bought cloves at low prices but sold rice, textiles and other things at expensive prices to the local people in the East Indies. The VOC brought products from India and various other regions at which they stopped on their way to the legendary Spice Islands.

A monopoly over the trade in raw materials from the East Indies brought great wealth to the Netherlands and stimulated the appearance of new social classes in the East Indies. Gold, pearls, tripang and feathers from 'Birds of Paradise' became all the rage in the new life styles of the rich Europeans (Andaya: 1993a, 176). They owned houses and slaves (Andaya: 1993a, 42). Slaves worked the clove plantations in Central Moluccas and the nutmeg plantations in Banda. Life styles of luxury and extravagance caused the VOC to go bankrupt in 1621 (van Klaveren: 1953, 75). The VOC passed on its debts to the Dutch government. These debts were only settled after the British returned control over the Netherlands East Indies to the Dutch in 1816 (van Klaveren: 1953, 87).

In the North Moluccan Sultanates, luxurious life styles were a sign of power in the palaces as well. Besides the collection of taxes, the Sultan of Ternate directly controlled the pearl trade as well as the trade in sea cucumbers (Mangunwijaya: 1987). According to historical accounts the Eastern part of Halmahera didn't produce cloves but its seas were rich in pearls and sea cucumbers. The Sultan of Ternate controlled rich areas such as the Bay of Kao and the seas around Morotai. The Sultan also controlled the production of iron in Galela and Ternate (Andaya: 1993b). Ternate controlled the natural resources in the region in order to pay for the costly, luxurious life styles in the palace. The Dutch used money that came from the exploitation of natural resources to construct a VOC fortress in Ternate. The Dutch negotiated permission to build the fortress in exchange for helping to drive the Portuguese out of the region.

Historical reports show that the policies of *hongi* and the VOC trade monopoly created great suffering among the local people throughout the Moluccas. These policies only benefited the Sultans of Ternate and Tidore. Soldiers of the VOC killed the indigenous traders and inhabitants of Banda by burning down the entire island. The people in Halmahera, in the regions of Kao, Tobelo and Galela also suffered. When war exploded between Ternate and Portugal, the Sultan forced the people of Eastern Halmahera to contribute men, boats and pearls to the war effort (Mangunwijaya: 1987, Visser: 1989). The tribes of Tobelo that lived along the Bay of Kao were experts in shipbuilding but villages that resisted the Sultan's request for help were wiped out (Andaya: 1993a, 121; see also Mangunwijaya: 1987).

The Sultan of Ternate appropriated the pearl resources of Eastern Halmahera and treated the people like slaves. Caught between the monopoly and *hongi* policies of

the VOC and the despotic pressures of the Sultanate, the tribes of Eastern Halmahera rebelled in the only way they could. Outwardly they remained loyal to the Sultan, but secretly they took to the seas as pirates. Since they were skilled boat makers, they designed their boats for speed and manoeuvrability so that they could easily escape from the pursuit of the Sultan's navy. As a result, the Sultan of Ternate's troops could not guaranteed the security of the maritime market from the 17th up to the early 20th centuries.

4.3. Coercive Systems of Political Loyalty

The VOC already began to move the centre of power from the North to the Central Moluccas at the same time when the policies of *hongi* were being enforced in the 17th century. However beginning in the 19th Century, the colonial government systematically and rationally continued the policy of undermining the power of the Sultanate in Ternate and transferring loyalty to the Dutch Colonial government. By the end of 19th Century, the power of the Moluccas as the source of spice production for the world market decreased drastically. Two factors determined this decline. First was the invention of the refrigerator in Europe that caused a sharp decline in the demand and value of spices. Spices had been the primary means for preserving food prior to refrigeration. Second, the British successfully planted clove plantations outside of the original regions of the Moluccas. Stamford Raffles firstly established clove plantations in Malaysia and Zanzibar in Africa. This new approach caused the decline of clove prices in the world market (van Klaveren: 1953, 103).

4.3.1. Simplification of Old Structures

Regime change transformed trade relations that were renegotiated in light of the power created by sophisticated maritime equipment. The agreement between traders at the grass roots level followed the big negotiations at elite levels that were conducted between the local kingdoms and the VOC (Nanulaitta: 1966). The colonial government continued the partnerships with the local elite structure and simplified the local kingdoms' institutions. The Sultan's palaces were separated from the central government. This simplification was linked to the control of regional income by the colonial government. As a result, local kings and their kingdoms didn't have income resources to pay their officers.

In the North Moluccas, the colonial government permitted the Sultan of Ternate to function as the tax collector for the society. But money gathered from taxation had to be delivered to the colonial government. During the era of the VOC, the Sultan of Ternate claimed particular regions as his resources for taxation. The Sultan of Ternate was part of the colonial apparatus that received salaries from the colonial government. He was also permitted to keep his title even though the colonial government established a policy to eliminate noble titles. The royal titles that were eliminated included *Kapitan* (Captains), *Mahimo* and *Ngofamangira*. De Clereq states that these titles were still used in the palace of the Sultan of Ternate until 1890 (de Clereq: 1890, 20). Beside the title of Sultan, the Dutch permitted

two other titles: *Jouhukum* or the traditional legal experts and *Kimalaha* or the Village Head (de Jongh: 1909, 756).

Colonial law nullified noble titles under the assumption that the old traditional power structures of *adat* prevented the local society from adjusting to modern life (Haar: 1948,11-12). The nullification of noble titles also eliminated the exchange systems that were practiced among the elite in the palace. The Sultan traditionally gave noble titles to the members of his family or associates who rendered outstanding service to the palace (Andaya: 1993a, 66). For example, the Sultan would give the title *Kapitan* to someone who showed leadership that resulted in military success.

Colonial policies didn't only destroyed the meritocracy in the Sultan's palace but also the practices of exchange between the Sultan and his people. Andaya records that exchange rituals were common in marriages between family members of the Sultans of Ternate and Tidore (Andaya: 1993a, 67). After Ternate surpassed Tidore, there was an obligation for Tidore to give wives to the Sultan of Ternate. Tidore became the 'wife giver' or wife's family (WF) while Ternate functioned as 'wife taker' or husband's family (HF)[171]. The WF may be thought to have a high position because HF has to present financial gifts to WF. However in the marriage rituals of the North Moluccas, the gifts given by the HF have to be paid back by the WF.[172] Ternate's manipulation of the exchange process in marriage rituals with the Sultan of Tidore mirrored marriage practices at the grass root level. The WF is located in a subordinate position that benefits the HF. For that reason the WF may negotiate for the HF to give fewer gifts so that they have fewer obligations.

Exchange relationships between the Sultan and his people, including his exchange relations with other royal families, were woven together through the exchange of products. The people had to give the first harvest to the Sultan. Tributes included cooked food and raw harvest. The people ate the cooked offerings together in the palace rituals. They presented their raw products based on the assumption that the Sultan had a right to the first harvest (Visser: 1989; Andaya: 1993a, 57). However, the ritual language used reveals the reality that in exchange for their offering to the Sultan, the Sultan was obligated to give gifts in return. Gifts from the Sultan included clothes, ceramics, iron and guns.

The process of ritual exchange guaranteed the Sultan's larger circle of trading relations. The Sultan reduced his accumulation of imported goods that he received from clove traders from outside the Moluccas. However when the colonial government controlled a monopoly of trade and was responsible for regional security, traditional exchange practices between the Sultan of Ternate and his people became redundant. In light of this, the colonial government's policy of eliminating royal titles makes sense. The Dutch took over the roles played by traditional titleholders.

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[171] I discuss the terminologies for the husband's family (HF) and the wife's family (WF) in Chapter III.

[172] cf. Jacobs: 1971: 115-116.

Why then did the title of *Jouhukum* persist right into the early 20th century (de Jongh: 1909, 756)? The office of *Jouhukum* did not exist in the old traditional practices of Eastern Halmahera where the people still practiced the local religion. The title is an honourable term of address to an expert on *adat* (tradition) and Islamic law. This position was created for the interests of the palace. The position of *Jouhukum* was the only space of substantive authority that was left to the Sultan of Ternate by the colonial government. The Sultan of Ternate claimed that the regions of Eastern Halmahera and elsewhere were under his authority. Therefore, *adat* law and Islamic law had to be enforced by the single legitimate authority, i.e. the Sultan of Ternate.

The colonial government granted legal authority to the Sultan in conformity with their apparent commitment to separation of religion from the state. The Sultan played the role of a religious and traditional leader whose task was to control society through religious and *adat* law courts. Not only did this provide legal status for the Sultan, it also was a lucrative source of income. People who brought their problems to the court had to pay a fine or fee. The more juridical cases that were brought before the Sultan's courts, the more income.

The colonial government also continued the traditional position of *Sangaji.* The *Sangaji* was a district officer who was responsible for overseeing an area that was a vassal of the Sultan. Two interests combined to preserve the *Sangaji* position. Both the colonial government and the Sultanate needed someone to collect their taxes. The *Sangaji* also gathered judicial cases that had to be solved by the palace court in Ternate. Judicial cases were often about disputes between people from different religions. The colonial government appointed a European Secretary to accompany each *Sangaji.* The colonial government hoped that the appointment of a European secretary would provide a balanced report about the situation in the districts. The two district officers received salaries directly from the colonial government. However the salaries were not equal. The colonial government paid less to the *Sangaji* than to the Secretary (de Jongh: 1909, 757).

While the religious court in Ternate continued to enforce Islamic *adat* law, the colonial government made changes in leadership policy. In the old policy, the Sultanate appointed only *Sangaji* who practiced Islam as leaders of the society, regardless of the religion of the local people. In the new policy, the colonial government usually appointed Heads of Districts and Village Heads according to the religion of the society. The government only appointed Muslims to lead Muslim Districts. For example, Muslim regions included the area around the river of Kao/Jodoh, Akelamo, Sonoto, Gamsungi, Buran and Bobane Igo. *Sangaji* from *Alfoeren* backgrounds led the regions of Boeng, Tugutil, Madole, Pagoe and Tololiko (de Jongh: 1909, 757). The original term, *alfuru* came from the Ternate word for 'farmer' (Jacobs: 1971, 103). However the colonial government used the

term to refer to the people who still practiced ancestral rituals related to the agricultural life cycle.[173]

In Halmahera, Muslims settled in the coastal regions that were accessible from Ternate. Muslims from Ternate often married with the local people. In Tobelo, in 1909 there were only 174 Muslims, while the *alfuru* included 1.296 people (de Jongh: 1909, 758). Therefore the government appointed an *alfuru Sangaji.* However, the District Head in Galela was a Muslim from the village of Igobula who had family relations with the Sultan of Tidore. During this period there were already Christians in Galela as a result of evangelisation by the Dutch missionary, van Dijken. In 1889 Galela included 115 Christians (van Baarda: 1995 [1903], 58). However the Colonial government (Regency) still chose a Muslim *Sangaji* to lead the district of Galela.

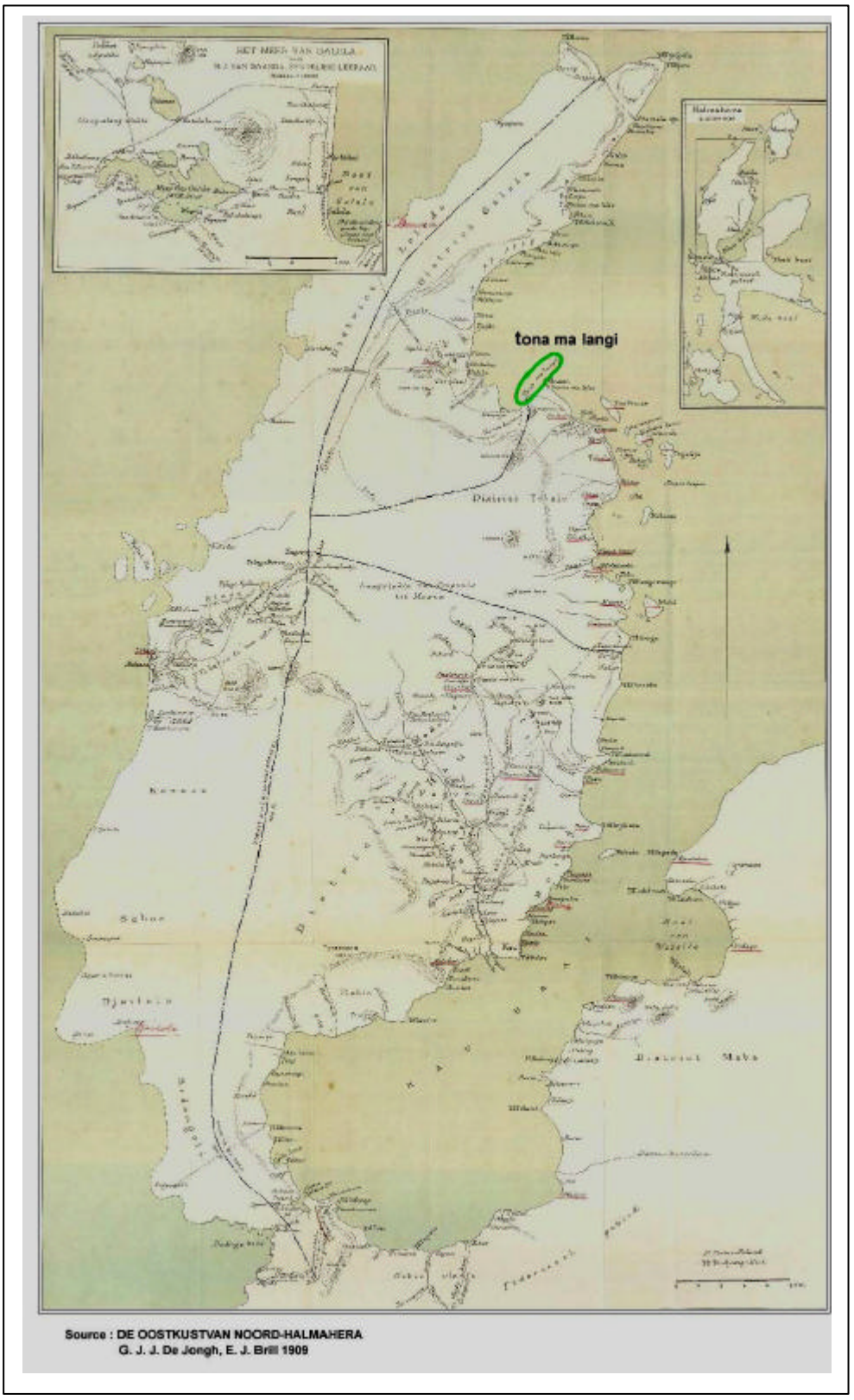
4.3.2. Territorial Borders

In 1896 the colonial government began to establish territorial borders within the North Moluccas. There were two purposes for this decision. The first was to improve control and aid in the collection of taxes. Second, the government wanted to end local tensions over borders. The territorial borders between Ternate and Tidore were explicated. The island of Halmahera was divided into two Regencies controlled by Ternate and Tidore. This division coincided with the claims of each kingdom about their subject regions in Halmahera (de Jongh: 1909, 756).

The region of Ternate included half of the Jailolo Sultanate's territory in North and South Eastern Halmahera. The regency of Tidore included the area from the centre of Halmahera Northwards to the borders of the Kao Bay and Southwards to the region of Bacan, which was in the Bacan Sultanate's territory. The Jailolo territory also included Dodinga within the regency of Tidore. The regions of Maba in Wasilea and Patani in Weda, which lie in the middle of the Eastern coast, were grouped with Tobelo as centres of administration and taxation. Tobelo joined the regency of Ternate. The island of Morotai had two *Sangaji*, one from Tobelo and the other from Galela. According to historical data, before this policy, there was only one *Sangaji* on Morotai from the Tobelo tribe. However this policy caused conflict because both Galelans and Tobelans inhabited Morotai. The Galelans didn't want to be led by a *Sangaji* from Tobelo.

[173] The etymology is similar to the Latin term 'pagan'. The Latin word pagan comes from the word *pagus* that means villagers or farmers (Williams: 2000 [1990], 39). The Church identified the ancestor religion of the farmers as pagan.

Map 8: Territorial Borders of Halmahera Island under the Netherlands Indies



The colonial government established territorial borders between the districts of Tobelo and Galela in order to stop the continual fighting between the two. The borders were set after hearing the claims of both Tobelo and Galela. The government located the territorial border between Tobelo and Galela in the region called *tona ma langi* (see Chapter III). When Ternate drove Portugal out of the North Moluccas at the end of the 16th Century, the Tobelans helped the Sultan of Ternate destroy the small Kingdom of Morotia in North Halmahera, which allied with Portugal.[174] As a reward for their help and bravery, the Sultan of Ternate gave a region in the Western part of Mamuya to the *Kapitan* of Tobelo who was *alfuru*.

Tona ma langi means, "this border, from the earth to the sky is enough land for us." It refers to the region in the northern part of Mamuya beside the river Mede. This became the new border of the Tobelo tribe. Actually the people speak Galela in the border area of *tona ma langi,* from Mamuya in the North, up to the village of Gorua, including little islands such as Tolonua. Traditionally, a territorial claim was marked by a sago tree and a torch tree (de Jongh: 1909, 757).

The people of Galela did not agree with the new borders declared by the Sultan of Ternate on the instigation of the Colonial government. However, they were afraid to oppose the government and could only submit. For generations, even up to the present, the Galelans remember how they lost part of their original territory. The marriage rituals still commemorate the resentment over the loss of the ancestral borders with the rite of *ciko ma bobangu*. A groom or bride from Tobelo who wants to marry a bride or a groom from Galela has to pay a fine as a symbolic payment to compensate the Galelans for their ancient loss of lands.

4.3.3. Taming the Halmaheran Pirates

In the 17th Century, VOC prosperity declined and they passed on huge debts to the Dutch colonial government that were finally repaid in the 19th Century. A representative of the Dutch government in the Netherlands East Indies took over management of the colony. The value of cloves was already in decline. War in Europe, including the expansion of Napoleon Bonaparte's French troops into other countries including Holland, also decreased trade. To handle the crisis, the colonial government designed a new policy called *cultuurstelsel*.

The colonial government chose Java as their centre of operations for their new policy in the Netherlands Indies (Ricklefs: 1993 [1981]). In Java, the British colonial government had already begun agricultural modernization, for example by introducing coffee cultivation in Priangan (van Klaveren: 1953, 158). The Dutch colonial government prohibited villages from contracting plantations, but recognized individual ownership of plantations and crop trading networks for export purposes (van Klaveren: 1953, 103). They also established project in Deli,

[174] Now, the people in the region believe in the story of *o Moro,* which refers to individuals hiding and wandering around in the jungles of Halmahera. These are believed to be the people of Morotia and the Portuguese who ran away from the attacks of the Ternate Sultan's troops.

Sumatra, cultivating coffee, tobacco, sugar cane and tea (van Klaveren: 1953, 158; Carpenter: 1923).

Within only a few years, the colonial government was able to pay off the debts inherited from the VOC (Carpenter: 1923).[175] The colonial government used surplus profits to improve the working conditions and social security of the indigenous labourers and foreign workers in Java. The colonial government added more to the stock of rice to prevent shortages in case of crop failures in Java. They also built schools and public facilities. However there were sharp differences between the treatment of indigenous workers and the facilities provided for European workers.

In the Moluccas, the development of educational and social facilities began from the Central Moluccas. There are several reasons. Firstly, in order to break the power of the Northern Sultanates, the Netherlands moved their centre of operations to the Central Moluccas. Cloves were still a major source of income, even though prices were not as high as before the rationalisation of agricultural. Clove cultivation flourished in the Central Moluccas, however the common people still suffer economically. The colonial government determined the price of cloves and enjoyed the benefits along with the North Moluccan Sultanates (Nanulaitta: 1966).

Secondly, the colonial government assumed that the Portuguese had already built some foundations for Western civilization through their mission work in the region. In the Central Moluccas, many people had become Catholics and found little difficulty in shifting their allegiance to the Dutch Reformed Church. With the subjection of the entire region, the Netherlands East Indies appointed missionaries as governmental officers in the Central Moluccas as agents of a new civilization.

Royal families and landowners in the Central Moluccas received first priority for receiving an education. They were permitted to speak in Dutch. The government established schools in the Malay language for common people. According to Carpenter, an American who travelled around the Netherlands Indies in the early 20th Century, the Colonial government built schools for the indigenous people on the island of Java. On the island of Ambon and in the central Moluccas the government didn't build any more schools, however Dutch missionaries set up mission schools. In Java, Christian missionaries only taught at private schools. The indigenous people managed their own schools. Vocational schools in trade and industry were managed by local leaders who were administrative officers in the colonial government (Carpenter: 1923, 165).

A formal report from the colonial government acknowledged their lack of attention to education for the common people outside Java (van de Wal: 1960, 5). The so-called "Ethical Policy" in the Netherlands prompted the Dutch government

[175] cf. C. Fasseur who calculates that in 1830-1840, there was a great loss from the *cultuurstelsel* (Fasseur: 1994)

to open schools for the indigenous people. However this policy was only started in Java in 1851. In the North Moluccas, Dutch missionaries and teachers from Ambon and Minahasa served the Dutch community who were living in Ternate. According to historical records, the North Moluccan Sultanates sent their family members to a Catholic mission in Ternate. However there was no school built especially for the common people.

A new era arrived when the colonial government began to send bright indigenous people to teacher training schools in Java. Indigenous teachers had to pass a difficult exAminahtion. However if they passed the exAminahtion, they received the same facilities, like salaries and health insurance that were paid to officers of the colonial government. They also received the right to take leaves of absence. Carpenter, in his travel report showed his admiration of the students at the people schools in Java who were just as smart as the European children.

The situation described above was far from the reality faced by the people in Eastern Halmahera. They were still very poor. They had to pay taxes to the Sultan of Ternate and to the colonial government. The Sultan of Ternate directly controlled the sources of pearls and sea cucumbers in Eastern Halmahera where they used to make a profit. The Sultan of Ternate determined the prices of boats from people in Kao and Tobelo. He also determined the price of rice. Dutch and Chinese traders determined the price of other commodities like clothes, ceramics, and iron (cf. Visser: 1989, 21).

In their apparent powerlessness, the people from Eastern Halmahera became pirates. In addition to obvious economic motivations the people also responded to the feeling of political oppression by rebelling against the system. The Sultan of Ternate didn't permit the colonial government to provide education for the local people. The fears of the Sultan of Ternate were not unreasonable because the Dutch missionaries took over the entire management of education in the East Indies in the beginning of the 19th Century (van de Wal: 1960, 5).

Regional factors also influenced the Halmaherans to become professional pirates. The region supported a thriving slave trade. Lapian's research shows that the Sultan of Ternate and the colonial government were overwhelmed by the mobilisation of sea pirates who operated on the Moluccan Sea all the way down to Sulawesi and Timor. The government could not arrest the pirates because their boats were just too fast. In addition to the people of Tobelo, Kao, Galela and Loloda on Halmahera, there were also pirates from Mindanao and the Sula Isles. The people of Mindanao were viewed as cousins of the Dayaks (Carpenter: 1923). Sea pirates from Loloda were actually Bugis (from Sulawesi) (de Jongh: 1909, 757).

The pirates captured and robbed trading boats carrying cloves and other goods. The pirates also attacked particular regions where the people could be captured and sold as slaves (Lapian: 1981). Some pirates took the heads of the enemies they killed. However the pirates from Tobelo, Kao and Galela just carved heads on their shields as a record of how many enemies they had killed. The abolition of

slavery in the Moluccas arrived later than in most other places. When slave trade became too dangerous it also helped stop piracy (Lapian: 1981). However in 19th Century colonial reports, the problem of sea and land pirates was still acute.

The Sultan's inability to control piracy may be the reason he finally accepted a petition from the Dutch Resident in Ternate and gave permission to allow a Dutch missionary to work in Halmahera at the end of the 19th Century. Since the arrival of the VOC in the end of the 16th century, till the end of the 19th century, Dutch Christian missionaries had not been permitted to work in this area under the control of a Muslim Sultanate. The VOC had also forbidden mission activity for fear that it might interfere with their economic policies. However in the late 19th Century, the Christian Party, which designed "the Ethical Policy", came to power in the Netherlands and introduced a new foreign policy.[176]

Why did the Sultan grant permission for Christian missionaries? Firstly, the Sultan must have been aware that he had already lost the allegiance of the people of Northeast Halmahera. Lapian says that the Halmahera sea pirates specialized in robbing the trading boats that were owned by the Sultan of Ternate (Lapian: 1981). They didn't attack boats from other tribes that sailed on the Moluccan Sea. Attacks that were intentionally focused on the Sultan of Ternate seems to indicate that the people saw a connection between their poverty and the unjust policies of the Sultan of Ternate.

Secondly, perhaps the Sultan harboured the hope that he could use the Christian missionaries to tame the sea pirates from Halmahera without changing their basic religion to Christianity. The people were resistant to Islam and still practiced their local religion. Thirdly, the missionaries brought basic education, agriculture and plantation training that could open up new fields of work and sources of income for the people in Galela, Tobelo and Kao. The Sultan hoped to tame their rebelliousness without giving up his monopoly over pearls and other sea resources, which had formerly belonged to the people. The people could start a new agro-export business, such as coconuts or tobacco, after the price of clove decreased.

The first Dutch missionary of UZV chose to work in Galela in 1866, even though a Muslim Sangaji from Ternate ruled the area. The Galela region was strategic economically because the Northeast coast of Halmahera is sloping and has natural harbours. In contrast, the Northwest coast has sharp rock and no natural harbours. The position of the harbours in Galela and Tobelo later became crucial factors for the national and international trade of copra and bananas (see Chapter III and Chapter V).

[176] Unlike the British, Dutch colonialism was very focused on economic matters and avoided a "civilizing mission." This orientation changed at the end of the 19th Century.

Almost 40 years later, at the turn of the 20th century, the Dutch Resident[177] in Ternate supported the Sultan of Ternate's plans because of the colonial government's new dualism or "ethical policy" that called for both improving the welfare of the people as well as promoting trade. Under the new policy, the Sultan still had the right to rule the common people according to practices of *adat* and Islam. However at the same time the policy guaranteed religious freedom for each person to choose or change their religion without coercion. Be that as it may, missionary reports from van Baarda (1995 [1903]) indicate that the colonial government showed very little enthusiasm for efforts to spread Christianity. Their interests were more in economics.

4.4. The Emergence of New Social Structures

The Ternate Sultanate allowed missionaries into Halmahera in hopes that they would increase the social and economic well being of the society without changing their local religious practices. The Sultan of Ternate still claimed that all of his domain was Muslim and believed that regions where the society still practiced their local religion would sooner or later become part of the Islamic community. Then the entire North Moluccas would be united under his supreme leadership.

4.4.1. Starting from the Central Moluccas

The colonial government established a coalition with the royal families, providing honour, education and employment. The children of royal families received the same education as the children of Europeans in the Netherlands East Indies. They also had access to positions within the colonial governmental structure.

The colonial government provided credit for those who wanted to expand their new businesses. This opportunity was open for those who had experience, including non-Europeans. The ethnic Chinese, Arabs, and Europeans used this moment well (Carpenter: 1923). They controlled almost the entire field of economics in the Netherlands East Indies. The common people acted as labours in the businesses owned by the rich.

The development of the Central Moluccas had a direct impact on the life of the common people. Dutch missionaries de-sacralized *adat* and sacralized Christian teaching. This changed the meaning of *adat*. The rituals of *adat* had directly related to material conditions; however, the new religious teachings changed the function of ritual *adat* into a mainly symbolic matter. The missionaries assumed that the traditional practices didn't fit with Christian teaching.

The missionary attitudes must be understood in the context of what was happening in Europe. The great power and subsequent collapse of the VOC was a sign of the social change that was happening in the Netherlands. Overwhelming material wealth and the growth of rationalism eroded the position of religion as a

[177] For an explanation of the Dutch Resident's position, please see Chapter I.

sacred matter (Weber:1974). People began to build their understanding from reason alone. Religion became a personal matter that didn't function in the public context. The division of labour in society led to a new kind of community based, not on family, tradition and religion, but on specialized, functional relationships (Durkheim: 1964). Religion lost its divine essence as the spiritual world was separated from the world of everyday life. The French Revolution strengthened the modern rituals of rationalism. However Protestant Pietism swept through Europe as a reaction to rationalism.

This mainstream Pietism aimed at bringing back the loving commitment of young people, traders and common society to the moral way of Christian experiences. Groups for Bible study formed in Holland (van Baarda: 1995). The desire to recover the spirit of early Christianity and escape from the shackles of secular life pushed many young people to evangelise the natives in the Netherlands East Indies. Their evangelical message included both spiritual salvation and material progress. Material progress required the moral virtues of the Dutch: hard work, frugality and rationality. Missionaries who left for the East Indies brought education and training in practical skills so that they could help the indigenous people leave behind their superstitions, increase their living standard, change their morality and become more civilized.

The success of Dutch missionaries was influenced by the availability of the Malay language that was used as the communication medium in the society. The Malay language began to spread in the 15th Century and became the *Lingua Franca* of the people in the Netherlands East Indies. The Dutch government declared it to be the language of the indigenous people. This policy undermined local ethnic languages but helped unify the East Indies. Language groups were disconnected from their cultures without the need to transform the people to become like the Dutch. The people were changed but at the same time the distance between them and the Dutch colonizers was still maintained. In the central Moluccas, according to the research of Frank Cooley, society still practiced *adat* ritual without understanding its meaning in their lives which had already changed (Cooley: 1961, 96). Ritual practices from their *adat* (tradition) that originally linked cultural idea and the material conditions of their everyday actions became just symbolic ceremonies.

The colonial government in the central Moluccas introduced new concepts, knowledge and practices. The city of Ambon became one of the centres of the new culture, which had begun to appear from the 17th to the 18th Centuries. The Dutch provided good facilities to the noble families and indigenous civil servants of the colonial government. They were permitted to learn the Dutch language. However the common people were only allowed to receive basic education in the Malay language.

The people who became Christians were separated from their kin-networks, which maintained the practices of the local religion. Christian villages were separated from non-Christian ones. The differences also appeared in personal style and dress. Missionaries decided that the people should wear white colour clothes for

everyday activities. Black was the religious colour that should be worn during religious activities. Indigenous women who had a European education wore hats just as the European women did. Indigenous men had short hair and wore long pants. Even up to the present, many Ambonese still wear black clothes to church on Sunday.

Indigenous non-Christians kept their traditional clothes. Women wore the traditional blouse (*kebaya*) and men wore the traditional cap (*peci*). They were permitted to attend indigenous schools, where Malay was spoken. They didn't work as teachers or civil servants, but they worked as labours at the market, the harbour etc.

Education in European culture and knowledge spread from Java, the central Moluccas, and Northern Sulawesi. The royal classes became civil servants. The Dutch mobilized these groups because they needed educators in the schools that were provided by the colonial government to empower society. Teachers were needed throughout the entire region of the Netherlands Indies (Nanulaitta: 1966).

The colonial government also recruited soldiers from the central Moluccas. Two material conditions supported Dutch policies. Firstly, the colonizers determined the price of cloves. Secondly, the colonial government limited the educational system to certain parts of society. The Dutch intentionally used poverty as a tool of control. Poor young people were interested in becoming soldiers with the Dutch military (*Koninklijk Nederlandsch-Indisch Leger*= KNIL) because they had no other future. At one time, according to historical notes, hardly any young people stayed in the Central Moluccas. Only old people, children and women stayed in Ambon. The Chinese dominated the middle level of economic activities, whereas Bugis, Makasarese and Ambonese Muslims managed the lower economic sector. The Ambonese youth became soldiers because of the social guarantees this made available to them (Nanulaitta: 1994).

The attraction for youth from the central Moluccas, especially the Christians, to become Dutch soldiers was spurred by the myth of Captain Jonker. This myth had spread among the military and had had a strong influence from the era of the VOC to the time of the Dutch colonial government. The myth relates that success will follow Moluccan youth because Captain Jonker would protect their security in the field of battle (Nanulaita: 1966, 90-98).

The colonial government provided systematic and orderly military training. The government used KNIL to overcome rebellious movements in the entire region of the Netherlands Indies. The centres for KNIL' s military education were in Cimahi, West Java and several places in Batavia (Carpenter: 1923). Participation in the KNIL was open to all indigenous people. However the recruitment and promotion of a soldier depended on selection based on the ethnic background of each soldier. At the beginning, soldiers who were Christians were classified as ethnic Ambonese; however, the Dutch added new classifications to distinguish ethnic groups such as the Ambonese and the Minahasans. Dutch soldiers were placed in higher positions and categorized in a special group. Muslim Moluccans

were also attracted to become soldiers although an assumption grew among the Muslims that to become a soldier of the KNIL was *haram* (forbidden), because they had to fight with the people in Aceh (Tudjiman: 1971, 18).[178]

Those who didn't want to be involved with benefits and privileges from the colonial government condemned those who worked as officers of the colonial governmental. This reaction made sense especially for those who had already converted to Islam. These groups rejected the efforts of the colonial government to provide public education and technical education for the common people. Dutch government also sent young people to the Netherlands for further education so that they could help the colonial government with the educational process for those who rejected the education delivered by Christian missionaries from Holland.

However, education for the common people, those who were Muslim or non-Muslim, was not widely available. The emptiness of the educational process stimulated the idea among the Islamic leaders in Java, who had also experienced public school and freedom of thinking, to create the Muhammadiyah movement. This movement aimed at facilitating education according to Islamic values. The Muhammadiyah movement also tried to pay attention to the economic aspect of the educational process in Islamic society (Nakamura: 1980, 276).

Hajj Achmad Dahlan initiated this movement. At the beginning, this organization was localized in central Java, but quickly spread to the entire Netherlands East Indies. The Muhammadiyah movement in the north Moluccas began in the 1930s (Kiem: 1993, 102). The presence of this movement in the north Moluccas tested the dualistic policies of the colonial government. The colonial government related the Muhammadiyah movement to the struggles for Indonesian independence. Kiem says that the flag of Indonesia began to rise on the roofs of the Muhammadiyah schools, the *al- madrasah al- ibtidaiyyah* (the elementary schools). The first of the *madrasahs* in the north Moluccas were in the regions of Galela and Tobelo.[179]

4.4.2. Decreasing Power of the Sultan of Ternate

Historians like Andaya and Andaya say that the imperial era of Malay rule was finished at the time of the Portuguese traders arrival in Asia (Andaya and Andaya: 1982, 55). However, in the Moluccas, the end of the Imperial era of Ternate and Tidore had just begun after the arrival of the VOC, following the establishment of the colonial powers in the region. The Dutch abolished the rights that had always followed the genealogical line of the Sultanate. The Netherlands politics of loyalty destroyed the charismatic characteristics attributed to the Sultan such as, that his reign was eternal and that he had personal sacredness as well as divine and magical strengths. The important impact of the decline of his ritual authority

[178] This can be shown through data about how many Muslim Moluccans, who had been members of KNIL, moved to Holland during and after the 1950s.
[179] See the detailed explanation at the end of this chapter.

was the erosion of his economic powers that were the foundation of all the other strengths he had had in the past (Andaya: 1975, 25).

The only strength that still remained was his status as Sultan. This position was tied to the religious genealogical imagination, which gave him the special title of an Islamic prince. This status as Sultan positioned him as the head of a religious hierarchy and member of a large Islamic brotherhood (*Ummah*) that included the Ottoman Empire and India.

Therefore, it is not surprising that the Sultan of Ternate still claimed the power of religious charisma, which the colonial powers could not take from him. The possession of this power was based on the Islamic teaching that the Sultan is the leader who has the right to protect his society. In Islamic political theory, a leader is God's representative in conducting God's work in this world (Matheson: 1980, 188). After the colonial government removed the royal titles of the Sultan's meritocracy, the only institution, which still supported the Sultan's old powers, was the palace court in which the office of *Jouhukum* was still important.

Another important factor was the extension of the function of *bobato* into eternity. The Ternate word *bobato* means 'organiser' or 'official'. There are two types, namely the *bobato dunia* who is a kind of public official, and the *botato akhirat* who is a spiritual leader (Mangunwijaya: 1987, 120ff; van Fraassen: 1996).[180]

The meeting of the *Ummah* at the Friday prayer is the important moment where the *bobata* of eternity and the *bobata* of mortal life give their speeches. The *bobata* of eternity leads the reading of the Qur'ân and the prayers in Arabic. The political speech from the Sultan was also delivered in Arabic. According to Bernard Lewis, in traditional Islamic practice the Friday prayer is the time to deliver policies on taxation and other crucial political problems (Lewis: 1995,10). Arabic was used as the formal language of the Friday prayers in the Sultan's palace. In addition to adding to the Sultan's religious prestige, using Arabic also conveniently blocked the understanding of colonial government officials.

Nevertheless, the Dutch continued to undermine the leadership of the Sultan of Ternate. In 1914, the colonial government terminated salary payments to the heads of the *Soa* (district) and its officers. The payment that the Sultan of Ternate had received every year, about Fl.45.000, was stopped after 1912. This policy was related to the decline of the spice income. However the Dutch still maintained official positions, such as the *Jougugu* and *Jouhukum* and the administrative secretaries who served the regions to the East and West of Ternate (van Fraassen: 1996, 56).

After the government abolished the Sultan's subsidy they needed to clarify and finance the traditional leader in a new way. In 1917, the colonial government wrote a letter to Sultan Mohammad Jabir Syah requesting that he take leadership education in Batavia. In 1925 he further honed his leadership skills as Assistant

[180] Compare this with the research of Lanny Probojo on Tidore where different terms are used: *Sowali* or *Jouguruy* (Probojo: 2000, 3ff).

to the Regency in Sumbawa. After returning to Ternate in 1929, he was appointed Sultan with full authority according to the traditional leadership heritage (van Fraassen: 1996, 56). However, with the modern education that he had received, the governance model of the Sultanate was adjusted to fit within the bureaucratic structure of modern government. The Sultan used the positions from the old Sultanate structure only in so far as they could function in the new situation. Traditional positions that were not relevant only remained as concepts without a practical concrete role.

The rationalization of the bureaucracy in the governance of the Sultanate and the Sultan's discontinuation as an officer of the colonial government, allowed him to conduct his own government freely. In the 1920s, the Sultan of Ternate appointed three people to become a *bobato akhirat*. The three religious leaders were *Haji*[181] Abdullah Hoatseng, who served as Imam in the district of Tobelo, *Hajji* Muhammad Tomagola who worked as the Imam in the district of Galela and *Haji* Umar Jamaah who functioned as the Imam in the district of Morotai. These three important Hajjis joined in the Muhammadiyah movement (Tomagola: 2000b, 25).[182] They all had the title, *Jouguru* or *bobato akhirat*. However, their position of religious teacher was not a functioning position in the palace. Therefore, there was little work for these three persons to undertake. New work was created by changing their roles as *Imams* to include that of the *Syari' ah* judges in several districts. With the extension of their role, the old position received a new meaning, one, which came through the Muhammadiyah movement. The traditional title of *Jouguru* was adjusted to the Arabic title *Ustadz* (Teacher).

Muslim teachers began to systematically propagate Islam (*dakwah*) all over the North Moluccas and the pilgrimage to Mecca became a common occurrence. Anthony Reid says that the trip to Mecca was the main source of knowledge about ethnic life outside Java in the 19th century (Reid: 1967). At that time, Java was the centre of the socio-economics and politics of the colonial government. Islamic eschatological beliefs encouraged solidarity among Muslims throughout the East Indies and beyond. They believed that all Muslims who are oppressed and poor will receive a new status in a new world after this mortal life. The Muhammadiyah movement, which had begun under the influence of the Islamic Brotherhood movement in Egypt, fit the needs of the local kingdoms in the Netherlands East Indies because the identities established by their former roles had started to disappear.

4.5. The Drums and the Bells call their Congregations

This sub section discusses changes in the social structure of Muslim society in the North Moluccas and the efforts to spread Islamic teachings. We examine why and how the Christian missionaries worked in the Northeast of Halmahera and the

[181] *Haji* is the title received by a male pilgrim to Mecca.
[182] Their work before becoming *Jouguru (Imam)* was as successful traders. They qualified as *Imam* because of the religious experiences they had received from their regular teaching of *"pengajian" (classes Qur'ân*).

impact of the Japanese occupation on religious life. This chapter closes with a discussion of religious practices in Ngidiho since Indonesian independence.

4.5.1. Religious Schools and the Resistance Force

After the clove trade lost it profitability and the Sultan lost his power, the common people took advantage of the power vacuum by improving their education. In the North Moluccas, the common people, who felt a part of the Tidore, Bacan and Jailolo heritage, competed for knowledge through the religious schools that were established since the 1930s. The kin-network of the royal families from Tidore, Bacan and Jailolo, and those who were tied to the Makian and Kayoa kinship groups, sent their children to Makasar to attend the religious schools. After they graduated, they returned to the North Moluccas to help spread Islam (*dakwah*). They carried out their mission (*dakwah*) in Tobelo, Galela, Morotai and Maba (the region of Patani, in Central Halmahera). Their targets were the hinterlands of the Halmahera Islands.

Amal Tomagola states that at the beginning, Islam spread only among the communities which remained along the coastal area of Galela, the northern coast of Tobelo, the coastal area along Morotai Island, in Loloda, Jailolo, Ibu and Sahu (Tomagola: 2000a, 24). The traders of Ternate and Tidore furthered the spread of Islam in the coastal areas. Fisherman and immigrants also contributed to the spread of Islam. They functioned as *Imam* to lead prayers and chanting from the Qur'an wherever they visited (Tomagola: 2000b, 21). These people often married indigenous people and settled in the regions where they could make a living.

The success of *dakwah* was determined by the methods employed by the original *Jouguru* who adapted the Islamic message to the local cultures. The rituals of birth, *khitan* (Arabic) (circumcision), marriage, death and various thanksgiving rituals were the results of a melding of elements from the local religion with Islam. The missionaries incorporated ancestral rituals as a part of Islam in order to attract the local people to Islam. They justified respect for the ancestors and for local spirits in relation to the Qur'anic category of *jinn*.[183] In Islamic teaching, worship is directed to God alone, but respect should be given to the Prophet and also to the ancestors (cf. Baker: 1988; Probojo: 2000, 3).

The *soa moagiowo* (people who still practiced the old religion, prior to conversion) were not easily converted to Christianity because the Christian missionaries didn't permit rituals to the ancestors or a belief in *jinn*. In contrast, the Muslim *Jouguru* answered the people's basic question about whether their ancestors could be saved if their descendents were converted to Islam. In a simple way, the Jouguru changed the position of the stone tombs in the ancestral graveyard so that they faced the direction *qiblah* as in the tradition of the Muslim graveyard (Tomagola: 2000b). *Qiblah,* an Arabic word is the direction toward

[183] In some parts of Indonesia, the distinctions between ancestors, local spirits and *jinn* are systematically unclear. See, for example, the discussion about beliefs among highlanders in Central Sulawesi (Aragon: 2000, 38-32). However in Galela, the distinction is clear as I explained in another part of this chapter.

Mecca, which Muslims face at the times of prayer. After an entire graveyard was changed to face the *qiblah,* the heirs and the direct family members sprinkled a little water and poured mixed flowers and *pandanus* on the graveyard. The ceremony closed with a reading from the Qur'ân and Arabic prayers. Following this ceremony, the *Jouguru* told the people that their ancestors were now Muslims. Islamization of the ancestors challenged other family members that were still alive to become Muslims too. After reciting the words of *syahadah* (the profession of faith), they formally became Muslims.

The spread of Islam became more organized after Muhammadiyah held a Consultation in Galela in 1938. The Consultation created an organisation named *Imam Permoesyawaratan Onderafdeling Tobelo* (Consultation of Imams of the sub-district of Tobelo) that was abbreviated as IPOT. The IPOT created a unified organization of Imams from the Districts of Tobelo, Galela, Morotai, Kao and Loloda.

IPOT established the first *madrasah ibtidaiyah* (Muslim elementary school) in Soa Sio, Galela in 1940. Muhammadiyah sent a teacher directly from its headquarters in Yogyakarta. His name was Ustadz Syamsuddin Yusuf. The project was funded by donations and the income from drama performances. (Tomagola: 2000b, 29). Muhammadiyah used dramatic performances as a method of *dakwah* in addition to the art of reading the Qur'ân and the art of *kasidah* (a religious chant in Arabic sung to the rhythm of a *gambus*). However the activities of IPOT stopped in 1942 when the Japanese troops conquered the entire Netherlands East Indies including the North Moluccas. Northeast Halmahera became the centre of Japanese defence. Dutch missionary activities also ended at the same time.

4.5.2. Building a New Alliance for Resistance

Dutch Protestant missionaries began work in Galela in 1866. The Sultan of Ternate gave permission for them to enter Galela because it was a region where he had already placed a Muslim *Sangaji* as his representative. At the beginning the Sultan of Ternate permitted the missionaries to carry out their work along the coastal area, *Tutu ma leleo*, where the Muslim community had already formed. However, of three missionaries who arrived in Galela, two stayed in the coastal area and one moved to the hinterland (van Baarda: 1995 [1903]).[184]

There is no statistical data left by the missionaries about the number of people from the district of Galela who still practiced *alfuru* when they began their work in the region. However according to a formal report from the colonial government in 1909, Galelan Muslims were located in only two villages, *Tutu ma leleo* and *Saluta.* Both villages were on the coast, in the Eastern part of Galela. Other villages like *Igobula, Soakonora, Mamuya, Dokulamo, Soa Tobaru Bale, Togawa, Longa, Gura, Ngidiho, Towara, Pune, Toweka, Limau Gotalalamo, Kira* and *Seki*

[184] Van Baarda later married a daughter of van Dijken and stayed at the mission house that had been built by his father-in-law.

were *alfuru* villages. The people of these villages still practiced the local religion. In 1909 there was already a Christian community in the village of Duma.

Duma is the name given to the village by the local people who converted to Christianity. After the missionary, van Dijken, was permitted to go to the hinterland, the *Sangaji* of Galela gave him a piece of land situated along the lake of Galela. Van Dijken was happy with the location because it suited his plan to carry out agricultural activities. However the local people considered this location very dangerous. In the Galela language, the location was called *ma doa* 'the place of giants'. They contributed the land to the missionary because they believed that a giant, who was called *o meki*, would eat him. The word *o meki* comes from the Ternate language and refers to Satan (*o toka*) whose tall body has a big hole in the backside. It is interesting to pay attention to how the Galelans came to call the village "Duma". The *Sangaji* of Galela, who was the representative of the Sultan of Ternate, gave the dangerous area of giants to the missionary in order to strengthen his claim that all of civilized Galela belonged to the Muslim Sultan. The only place given to the Christian missionary was a land of monsters! However, much to the people's surprise, the missionary, van Dijken, did not die in that dangerous place. The people said that only he was not touched by the giant (*Duma una wi doohawa*) (Magany: 1984, 96). The word 'Duma' comes from that sentence.

After the missionary's success in overcoming *o meki* the community always relied on him, especially during storms. His house was always full of people who came for protection because they feared the evil spirits that would appear through the natural phenomena. They asked van Dijken to pray to God; many times his prayers were efficacious. He could address storm and plague. In 1876 there was a rebellion led by Dano Babu Hasan, who claimed to be the offspring of the Jailolo Sultan. He came, along with 600 followers, to ask van Dijken to become their king against the Sultan of Ternate, but van Dijken rejected this invitation. Instead, he used this moment to stop the rebellion (Magany: 1984, 100). Van Dijken rejection of political rebellion created doubts among the *alfuru* people concerning his authority and the benefits they might receive if they became Christians. The people saw religion as a political means to attack the power of the Ternate Sultan, whereas for van Dijken, religion was a spiritual matter that made people more civilised.

As explained in Chapter III, van Dijken changed the agricultural schedule. The first planting was changed from April to January with the harvest time in June, while the second planting was changed to August with the harvest time in December. This influenced the agricultural pattern of the Galela people in general. However this new method didn't make the Galelans become Christians. The experiment with crops like coffee did not bring hope because the plants were not in the lowlands. The chocolate experiments also failed, due to the attack of insects. Because of these failures, van Dijken asked the people to again plant rice. Van Dijken described those who converted to Christianity as coming from a slave background or those who were so poor that they could not pay for the marriage dowry (*mas kawin*). His wife, a Manadonese taught the new Christians reading

and writing. Therefore up to 1899, a year before his death, the number of Christians in Galela was only 65 people, including 33 men and 32 women who were already confirmed. 105 children had also received baptism for a total of 170 Christians. Among these, there were 60 students (van Baarda: 1995 [1903], 58). Van Dijken baptized each convert individually after in-depth teaching about the Christian faith. He located the new Christians in the village of Duma that he built so that they would not go back to practice their old religion.

Because of pressure from the Muslim communities along the coast, mission activities in the coastal region were closed in 1871. The missionaries moved to the district of Tobelo but didn't stay long. Then in 1897, a missionary named Hueting began his work in the district of Tobelo after waiting a year for formal permission from the Sultan of Ternate. Hueting writes that the Tobelo people were rude but proud that they were the offspring of sea pirates and had a sincere heart. The characteristics of the Tobelo people were so interesting to him that he carefully learned about their kinship relations (Hueting: 1901). Magany says that his capability to understand the traditions of the people made him a success in Christianising Tobelo (Magany: 1984).

In the year of Hueting's arrival in Tobelo there was a dispute between the Sultan of Ternate and the *alfuru* people. The Sultan of Ternate decided to replace an *alfuru Sangaji* with a Muslim *Sangaji*. The *alfuru Sangaji* was asked to move out to Bacan. However he returned to Tobelo and hid on a small island called Raha. The missionary used this moment to persuade him to return from the island. Hueting helped the *Sangaji* solve the problem with the *Posthouder* (*Hoofd Plaatselijk Bestuur* = the local representation of the Dutch government). The delivery of the Sangaji prevented the eruption of fighting between the people of the Sultan of Ternate and the *alfuru* people. The people began to trust him.

The missionary prevented war between the old Sangaji who had returned from Ternate and the soldiers of the Sultan of Ternate. The old Sangaji then left Ternate because he did not get proper security. The return of the Sangaji caused restlessness in the society because there was a possibility the soldiers of the Sultan of Ternate would arrest him. In the village of Pitu, this Sangaji and his people stayed all night alert with swords and spears. At the suggestion of the missionary, the old Sangaji was asked to disperse the crowd and waited for a resolution after the arrival of the head of the *Residentie* (Resident) from Ternate to Tobelo. The Resident extended the working status of the old Sangaji for one year (Magany: 1984).

The presence of the Resident in Tobelo strengthened the people's awareness of who were in fact the government leaders in the North Moluccas at the time. The vacillation of society was connected with the information they received from the Muslims in Ternate that if anyone became Christian he would have to pay higher taxes than non-Christians. Christians would also be asked to do heavy *herendienst* tasks. The head of the *Residentie* knew that the Ternate people oppressed the *alfuru* community so he announced "everyone who lives under the flag of the Governor has to practice her/his religion without being forced"

(Magany: 1984, 112). Actually the *alfuru* people in Tobelo were disappointed by the Resident's statement. They wanted a strong instruction from the colonial government. They had hoped the Resident would say that Christianity was the obligation, because to their mind, becoming a Christian was the sign of *kompeny,* which means the VOC or the Dutch.

On March 25 to 28, 1898, the *alfuru* people of Tobelo gathered to declare their commitment to convert to Christianity. Christian teaching claimed the ancestral ritual materials were idolatry. Therefore before anyone could receive baptism, they had to participate in an idol-destroying procession and burn all their ancestral ritual materials. All the villages of the District of Tobelo requested baptism and burned their ancestral objects on a large stage. Then the people asked the missionary to give them new names that were taken from the Bible. Cutting the hair was another initiation sign for those who would become Christians. With the large number of people converting to Christianity, Hueting didn't have to locate the new Christians separately from the *alfuru* villages, as van Dijken had found necessary. All of Tobelo quickly converted to Christianity.

Nevertheless, among the new congregations people still practiced the old customs. Sometimes they visited the healers. If there was a disaster, they believed that *o dilike* or the ancestral spirits were punishing them and leading them astray because of their conversion. Some Christian theologians complained that Hueting's method of mass baptism resulted in the continuance of old religious practices within the form of Christianity (Djurubasa: 2000). Even today the Tobelo people weave together their world religion with local religious practices in their everyday life.

However the missionaries tried to strengthen Christian faith in the society through a rational process, which changed the system of thought and practices of the people. They introduced new knowledge of health, nutrition, agriculture, carpentry and public education. The new knowledge aimed to block the use of *adat* rituals and traditional knowledge, which remained in their practices. The missionaries built basic schools and schools of agriculture, carpentry, theology and teacher training. They also provided a hospital. Missionaries even adopted children as a means to educate candidates for ministry.

With the opening of schools in Tobelo, both theological and public, teachers from the Central Moluccas moved to the North Moluccas. The Christianisation process that had already begun earlier in Ambon, along with available human resources in Minahasa, helped the progress of missionary work in Tobelo. Because of this, a new social group appeared in Tobelo, foreigners from Minahasa and Ambon who were more educated than the indigenous people of Northern Halmahera. The Ambon and Minahasa missionaries adjusted their methods of Christianisation to the context of the traditional beliefs of the local society. For example they followed the example of Islam in addressing the fears of the people with regard to the fate of their ancestors. They held a special worship service to hand over to those who had already died, the results of God's work of forgiveness, salvation

and resurrection. The spread of Christianity throughout the North Moluccas started from Tobelo.

In North Halmahera, the people's new loyalty to Christianity not only led them to support the colonial government but also freed them from the power and authority of the Ternate Sultanate. The colonial government used religion to strengthen its position in the Netherlands East Indies. Groups that allied with it through conversion to Christianity accepted the transformation of their rituals and submitted to a new hegemonic worldview. The same pattern had already taken place in the politics of ritual conducted by Muslim Kingdoms before the arrival of Western traders.

4.5.3. The Moluccas under the Japanese Empire

The Japanese samurai who were used by the VOC as its bodyguards in its trading boats in the $17^{th} - 18^{th}$ Centuries, returned to the Netherlands East Indies in 1942 and took over the power of the Dutch colonial government. The Japanese conquered Chinese territory in 1937. Japan's power was extended quickly to the entire region of South East Asia. In 1942, Japanese soldiers occupied the Netherlands East Indies. Although the occupation of Japan in the region only lasted three years, the impact of its presence sharpened the tension in the society of the Netherlands East Indies. The Japanese colonial government used ritual elements to raise feelings of nationalism in the East Indies and opposition to the Dutch colonial government. The Japanese forces again used the politics of ritual to sharpen ethnic and religious divisions that were already deeply embedded in the society.

Richard Chauvel states that Japanese colonizers used nationalism to gain acceptance in the East Indies especially among the nationalists (Chauvel: 1986). The royal classes, including the Sultan's network, and those who were loyal to the Dutch colonial government, were set aside from the governance structure. Nationalists were appointed leaders at the local level. The Sultan of Ternate, Mohammad Jabir, escaped with his followers to Australia and resided there from September 1944 to August 1945 (van Fraassen: 1999, 57). The Japanese sought support from the Muslim majority by using religious differences between Muslims and Christians as the criteria for selecting candidates for government management positions. In the beginning of 1943, the Japanese promoted Islamic organizations and emphasized Islamic identification in everyday life.[185]

The Japanese used the politics of ritual to destroy the educated social classes that tended to be loyal to the Dutch and were dominated by the Christian communities in the Moluccas. Destroying the identity and status of the dominant group meant destroying the Dutch identity that still remained in the political formation of the people. In this era, as reported by Chauvel, Muslim groups looted the houses that

[185] cf. Feith who records the interview with Indonesian people who lived in the era of the Japanese occupation who now live in Australia.

were left behind by the colonial government. They also looted Chinese stores (Chauvel: 1986, 10).

The Japanese shut down Christian organizations and schools. Churches were used as warehouses for the war equipment of the Japanese. The nationalist movement in Ambon had little influence because of the closeness of the Moluccans with the colonial government (van Fraassen: 1999, 57). However, in this period, there were also some Christian nationalists who worked together with the Muslim nationalists especially in Java. In Ambon, a Christian nationalist named E. U. Pupella led the *Sarekat Ambon* ("Ambon League").[186] He received a position from the Japanese colonial government.

In the North Moluccas, after the Sultan of Ternate and his followers escaped to Australia, the remainder of the Dutch colonial government, along with pro-Dutch local people, defended themselves against the attack of Japanese soldiers. North Halmahera became a staging area for the Japanese troops. The Japanese recruited Javanese and local people into a force called *Heiho*, which fought on the Japanese side. At the same time, churches and all the Christian mission activities were closed. However the Japanese colonizers permitted the operation of churches under leadership of indigenous people such as the one in Tolo, Jailolo, who had no connection with the Dutch colonial government (van Fraassen: 1995, 57; cf. Haire: 1981).

The defeat of the Japanese in the Second World War stimulated Indonesia to declare national independence on August 17, 1945. The Sultan of Ternate returned in August 1945. The Dutch colonial government also soon returned and welcomed the Sultan of Ternate by giving him a position to lead the Dutch army (KNIL) with the rank of Lieutenant General. The Dutch hoped he would unify the Moluccan people to side with them. However, it was clear that the people did not support the Sultan as the head of the KNIL. The people saw it as just another Dutch political manoeuvre (van Fraassen: 1999, 57).

In northern Halmahera the nationalist movement initiated by Muhammadiyah received fresh impetus from the Japanese colonial government. It is said that when they heard of the Declaration of Indonesian Independence in Jakarta, the people in Galela shouted with joy. The news of Independence came to Galela through the members of *Heiho* who were from Java. They mobilized the Galela people, both Muslims and Christians, to parade the red and white Indonesian flag to Tobelo where the Dutch army (KNIL) tried to control the demonstration. This red and white parade was related to a movement to carry the flag from Java to the Moluccas. Both Christian and Muslim Moluccans who lived in Java participated in the movement. The Moluccan youth returned to their homeland to set up centres for the Indonesian Republic's government in regions that could not be reached easily from Jakarta (Lapian: 1975, 116).

[186] See (Chauvel: 1986, 7); see also Chapter V.

The Red and White Parade from Galela to Tobelo was a sign of rebellion against the Dutch colonial government (Leirissa: 1983). However the people of Tobelo, who still had contact with the Dutch, felt humiliated by this movement. In reaction, the Tobelans used abusive language against the Galelan nationalists. The Galelans still maintain the memory of this abuse in their ritual practices. Until now, if a young man or a young women from Tobelo is going to marry a young woman or a young man from Galela, he/she and her/his family have to pay a fine, called the "red and white fine" (*denda merah putih*). The Galelans created this fine in order to repay their humiliation at the hands of the Tobelan masses during their march with the red-white flag in 1945.

During the struggle for Independence from 1945 to 1950, the Sultan of Ternate switched roles from appointed administrative leader under the Dutch, to politician. When the Sultan joined the PASMU party, the nationalist leaders in Jakarta terminated his administrative position because they felt he was not nationalistic enough. The nationalist Party of Indonesian Unity (PI) was the popular party in the North Moluccas. Although PASMU did not win in the northern Moluccas, the Sultan of Ternate got the position of Minister of East Indonesian Affairs in the cabinet of Tatengkeng during the period of the East Indonesian State (NIT) (van Fraassen: 1999, 57). In 1950 the government of the East Indonesian State (NIT) was dissolved and the Sultan received no position. In April 1950, the Southern Moluccan Republic (*Republik Maluku Selatan*= RMS) declared its independence from Indonesia and the Indonesian government accused the Sultan of Ternate of being involved. He was arrested and moved to Makasar. After going through the formal process of arrest, he was returned to Ternate but then moved to Jakarta to work as an officer of the Interior Ministry. In 1960 he retired with a position parallel to the head of the Regency.

4.5.4. Ngidiho: 1945 to 1965

The Netherlands united many regions, with different ethnic backgrounds, religious complexities and local kingdoms within one colonial territory called the Netherlands East Indies. In a sense, the Dutch created the unity of Indonesia. However the Japanese seized on the already growing nationalist sentiments as the key to her politics of ritual. By using nationalism and Islam as tools of anti-Western colonialism, the Japanese colonizers had to accept the likely result, i.e. the independence of Indonesia. When they lost the war, the Japanese troops were kicked out.

After the dissolution of the East Indonesian State (NIT) in 1950, another rebellion broke out in South Sulawesi. The *Darul Islam*/Islamic Army movement (DI/TII) was led by Abdul Qahar Muzakkar, a Bugis from Palopo (de Jong: 1996, 9). This movement was related to the movement of DI/TII in Java led by S. M. Kartowirjo (de Jong: 1996, 682). DI/TII aimed to set up an Islamic state ruled by Islamic law. The DI/TII movement in Makasar criticized the dominance of Sukarno, who had centralized Javanese power (Muzakar in Feith and Castle: 1960). Dissatisfaction with Sukarno led to criticism of the power structure of NIT and the Indonesian army (TNI/APRIS) for including too many Christians. Therefore the ritual

language inherited from the Japanese, i.e., anti-Chinese, anti-Dutch, anti-West and anti-Christian was central to the DI/TII movements. This political language quickly spread to the entire territory of East Indonesia.

DI/TII received a positive response in Galela especially in Soa Sio where the nationalist movement was rooted in the Muhammadiyah movement. However, in the hinterland, this movement provoked opposition from a society, which was mostly *alfuru*. The soldiers of DI/TII murdered the *kimalaha* (the head of the village) in Ngidiho. The local people accepted the man's murder as his fate, because he was not indigenous to Ngidiho.[187] However, the murder of their *kimalaha* united the people in Ngidiho in rejecting the DI/TII movement and they even helped the Indonesian military (TNI) to destroy the movement.

After the coup of 1965 and before the parliamentary election of 1971, the Indonesian government declared that each citizen must affiliate with one of the 'universal' religions that are practiced in Indonesia (see Feith: 1971 [1957]). According to the testimony of the local people, in Ngidiho, the formal process of conversion had already taken place in the 1950s and was completed on a single day.[188] The people gathered in an open field and two religious leaders, one Christian and one Muslim stood in front of the community. Then those who wanted to become Muslim moved to the left of the gathering to join the *imam* whereas those who wanted to become Christian moved to the right side joining with the reverend/minister (*pendeta*). This process of conversion resulted in some family members of the same household becoming Christian and others becoming Muslim. In Ngidiho, the number who chose to become Muslim was higher than those converting to Christianity. However, they stayed together in the same village although they rearranged the locations of their living-quarters. The Muslims moved their houses to the west side of the village while the houses of Christians were on the eastern side of Ngidiho.

Because the conversion of the society in Ngidiho was conducted without force, the people perceive their religious practices as different from other Islamic villages which had became Islamic earlier. Before the 1999-2000 violence Ngidiho was a heterogeneous village where Christians and Muslims lived together. The Muslim majority in Ngidiho opposed the efforts of Muhammadiyah to change their religious practices, which were accused of not conforming to the religious practices written in the Qur'ân. The Muslims of Ngidiho still use the pre-Islamic drum (*bedug*) to call people for worship. Muhammadiyah declared that the authentic call for prayer is the voice of prayer (*azan*). According to the Qur'ân, the use of the human voice distinguishes that call from the sound of bells that were used in the churches.

[187] The position of *kimalaha* is inherited, however, he was appointed *kimalaha* because of his marriage to a woman from Ngidiho.

[188] I received this information first from *Oom* Din. Then in February 2002, I also reconfirmed the story with the Christian elders from Ngidiho who were in Tobelo as refugees. The interview was carried out with *Oom* David Tunepe and his wife.

In 1957, another movement appeared in Galela called *Perjuangan Semesta Alam* or *Permesta* (Universal Struggle). This movement began in Minahasa. Muh. Saleh Lahade, a Bugis from Barru led the movement along with J. F. Warouw, a former KNIL member who was from Minahasa (de Jong: 1996, 683). The movement was very critical of the central government and struggled for regional autonomy and the economic development of Eastern Indonesia. *Permesta* used political language that distinguished between Java and the territory outside Java; it succeeded in uniting people who organized against the central government. In the north Moluccas, most immigrants from North Sulawesi followed the movement. The guerrilla fighters of the movement wandered in the forests of Halmahera, including in the Galela region, and influenced the every-day life of society.

The so-called September 30, 1965 Communist Movement (*G 30 S PKI*) was a traumatic experience for village people throughout Indonesia, including Galela. The attempted *coup d'etat* killed eight top Indonesian Army Generals. However the reaction by the military killed hundreds of thousands of people suspected of involvement with the Communists. Ngidiho directly experienced the results because the neighbouring village of Makete included suspected communists, who were immigrants from Sangir, North Sulawesi. Their presence in Makete village had begun when several Sangir people were accepted to reside in Ngidiho. These people could be described as pioneers. The family of Madelu, in the village of Ngidiho inherited land from the Sultan of Ternate in 1936. This land is called *gogasa*, i.e. land that was owned by the Sultan of Ternate (cf. Visser: 1989, especially Chapter IV).

The Indonesian Communist Party (*Partai Komunis Indonesia* or PKI) tried to expand its territorial influence through the method of cell growth. They built their movement with the rhetoric of family. Family became the centre of unity and distribution. In 1963, *Oom* Madelu, a charismatic Communist leader, was appointed Secretary of the village of Makete. Under his leadership an elementary school was built in Ngidiho. However his charisma could not win over the people of Ngidiho to choose the communist party. Why not? Because the indigenous people of Ngidiho thought that *Oom* Madelu was not an indigenous person. The people of Ngidiho, like most other indigenous people in Galela chose the party of Masyumi. Nonetheless, *Oom* Madelu was very popular and was obviously accepted in Makete: the communist party won in this village.

After the attempted coup in 1965, several leaders of the communist party in Makete, including *Oom* Madelu, were categorized as "A Class" communists and arrested. He was sent for 5 years of prison in Ternate. Then he was moved for another 5 years to the prison in Tobelo. For the last five years he was kept under house arrest in the prison of the police office in the District of Galela, which permitted him to return home every weekend. During the last 5 years of his punishment, he could gather with his family and try to replace what he had lost by planting coconuts. Before the arrival of the banana company in Galela in the 1990's, *Oom* Madelu was one of the owners who had many hectares of coconut plantation.

4.6. Conclusion

My analysis takes an historical approach to show how the politics of conflict changed under different conditions but always used ritual to distinguish and to unite a community. This approach shows how people shaped their identities over a long period of time in the North Moluccas. The Moluccas enviable position in world trade failed to create prosperity but instead resulted in the hegemony of colonialism from the 15th to the 20th centuries.

Every period of colonialism shows how the politics of ritual differentiated different groups from each other. Each new power created new idioms, tactics and policies to oppose the power structures that were left behind. The Sultan of Ternate, Portugal, the Netherlands and Japan all used the politics of ritual differently. However, the Portuguese and the Sultan made greater efforts to achieve religious uniformity in their realms. The Dutch were content to use economic incentives to reward those who followed the preferred religion, but in general opposed the link between religion and political power. The Japanese however explicitly used religious rhetoric to attract support in their war against the West. They all favoured certain groups based on their religious loyalties and all seemed more interested in their own economic and political interests than they were in the religious practices of the local people.

This chapter shows the ability of grass roots society to defend its rights against exploitation by bureaucratic elites. For example, the Galela people are proud of their ancestors' involvement as pirates in the early 19 century because they were able to protect their land. The people sculpted their memories of oppression into stories and dance that are open to reinterpretation from time to time. Religion and ritual provide ways to build collective identity. Religion also is a means to create coalitions against the enemies of the community. *Often* the people accepted and modified an outside institution of power as a means of increasing their knowledge but without engaging in depth with its ideology.

Sometimes feudal relations based on ancient ties, such as the territories claimed by the Sultan of Ternate, were radically changed by the intrusion of a new power from outside through trade. Religious loyalty tied the society together in the North Moluccas, but was always influenced by competition such as is shown in the trading relationships. In Halmahera, the spread of Islam and Christianity occurred slowly at the end of the 19th Century. Although the Sultan of Ternate was a Muslim who helped form the political identity of society in Halmahera, this did not occur smoothly because his policies were often oppressive to the local people. Indigenous groups that felt oppressed by the Sultan tended to retain their tribal religion or convert to Christianity. However the most profound relationship between religion and politics began in Halmahera when religious identity was required as a part of political identity before the first parliamentary election in 1955. The people in Ngidiho were forced to convert to Islam or Christianity before they could vote.

Chapter V
National Political Rituals and Regional Politics

> "You ask, why should the parties be buried? Is that not burying democracy? No, brothers and sisters! If we bury the parties and, having done that, do nothing, and then if there arises an individual who governs by himself, and particularly if he rules by the whip – yes, in that case democracy is dead" (Sukarno, as quoted in Feith and Castles: 1970, 83).

In this chapter I am going to discuss how political forces in Indonesia established their legitimacy by using ritual elements to unite the Indonesian people. This has been done to such a degree that some observers call the political scene in Indonesia "ritual politics." Sukarno was a master at ritualizing his style of administration. Political parties competed by using symbols, myths and ideological discourse.[189] Under the New Order and in the present reformation the use of ritual has been a major characteristic of Indonesian politics. The quotation from Sukarno at the beginning of this chapter shows his struggle to build a democracy in Indonesia. This struggle still continues up to the present.

5.1. Watching the Presidential Election from Ngidiho

On the afternoon of October 20, 1999, the guest room of the Ngidiho Village Head was packed with villagers who gathered to watch the fourth election of the President of Indonesia. No one wandered about in the village. Everyone gathered in those houses that had television sets to watch this historical moment in Indonesia. The election of the President and Vice-President in 1999 was relatively democratic and often compared with the legislative elections of 1955.[190]

The head of the People's Consultative Assembly (*Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat* or MPR), 1999-2003, Amien Rais, announced the names of the three participants in the 1999 presidential election: Yusril Ihaza Mahendra from the

[189] cf. Schulte Nordholt:1980, 199-203; Dracklé:1996, 33, n14.

[190] See the explanation from Herbert Feith on the issue of the Indonesian election in 1955 (Feith: 1971 [1957]). See also (Latief: 1998). Latief writes about the history of the weak dynamics of Indonesian presidential elections. There are several reasons for this. First, the Indonesian state was created and the president and the vice president were chosen on the basis of a suggestion of one member of *Persiapan Penyelidikan Kemerdekaan Indonesia*=PPKI (The Investigation Committee for the Preparation of Independence) that met on August 18, 1945. Second, the state was in a period of transition in the system of governance in which it was likely to change from a unitary state to a federal republic. Third, the state was in a crisis at the time of the announcement of the Presidential Decree in July 1959. Fourth, the replacement of government because of the 1965 September 30 movement that brought Suharto to leadership of the government after the Temporary People's Consultative Assembly (*Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat Sementara*) had abrogated the appointment of Sukarno as the heroic revolutionary leader and life-long president. Fifth, during the New Order era, the election of the president had been by agreed nomination and consensus. However, the first direct presidential election was held in 2004 when every Indonesian was given the right to vote for their chosen candidate.

Moon and Star Party (*Partai Bulan Bintang* or PBB);[191] Abdurrahman Wahid (also called Gus Dur) from the National Awakening Party (*Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa* or PKB),[192] who was also supported by the Reformation Parties,[193] and the "Central Axis" (*Poros Tengah*)[194] namely the United Development Party (*Partai Persatuan Pembangunan* or PPP) and the National Mandate Party (*Partai Amat National* or PAN);[195] Megawati Sukarnoputeri from the Indonesian Democratic Part of Struggle (PDI-P). Akbar Tanjung announced the cancellation of his candidacy from Golkar, followed by a formal explanation that his nomination was supported by some who were supposed to nominate B.J. Habibie. These groups had then been committed to the Golkar single nomination of Habibie who had already withdrawn himself after the rejection of his responsibility report by the General Meeting of the MPR.

When the head of the MPR struck the gavel as the sign that the presidential election process had begun, Yusril Ihza Mahendra formally withdrew in favour of another candidate which he hoped would be Gus Dur. Clapping to show their respect, the members of committee welcomed his withdrawal. The head of the MPR then reviewed the names of the presidential candidates. The process of election began at 12.00 noon. Gus Dur and Megawati were competing for the 691 votes of the members of the MPR.

The vote counting began at 13.36 pm and was very lively. Clapping followed each count of a vote for either Gus Dur or Megawati. In addition to the members of MPR, the balcony of room Nusantara V, was crowded with supporters of each candidate. At the beginning Megawati was slightly ahead, but then the counting began to be in favour of Gus Dur until the lead grew greater and greater. Gus Dur's name was called over and over and the hysterical shouts of Gus Dur supporters could not be blocked out as they crowded the room.

The television camera focussed on the faces of the two politicians. They both appeared cool and calm. The droning sound of *Allahhu Akbar* (God is great) began to be heard but was stopped by the chair of the meeting. Gus Dur clearly led the count; he ended up with 373 votes against Megawati's 318. So Gus Dur was elected as the fourth Indonesian President.

Megawati got up from her seat and walked to Gus Dur holding out her hands to him. Then they hugged each other. After the room had calmed down, Gus Dur with Megawati greeted the people by delivering a speech in which he invited all Indonesian people to unite. Through the television, Megawati calmed down her supporters who were gathered in front of Hotel Indonesia in Jakarta waiting for

[191] PBB which was formed on July 17, 1998 and is based on Islam. Historically, it is relates to the *Masyumi* party of the Old Order (*Orde Lama*) era.
[192] PKB was created on July 23,1998; based on Pancasila, it was founded by the Islamic community, especially by the members of NU (*Nahdlatul Ulama*).
[193] The Reformation Parties is a joint grouping of small parties, such as PUDI, which only got a small number of votes in the 1999 election.
[194] The name Central Axis was given to an alternative grouping that identified itself as a bridge between Golkar and PDI-P.
[195] PAN was formed on May 20, 1998 and is based on Pancasila.

the announcement of the presidential election. She asked people to honour the result of the election that had just taken place.[196]

The joy in the meeting room of the MPR was not reflected in those of us who were watching the national election on the television. People were astonished at seeing the fourth presidential election. In this remote region, far from the centre of the government, the people of Ngidiho were attentively observing the process of this Indonesian presidential election that was different from the last one. The presidential election in the New Order era had been with a single candidate and the decision was consensual. However the most surprising result for the Ngidiho people watching the election was that someone like Gus Dur could be elected president. Reflecting on the complexity government tasks in the village, the Village Head of village questioned how a blind man like Gus Dur could become President. He then answered his own question by saying, "God has chosen a blind man to become the leader of Indonesia because the leaders are fighting".[197]

The surprise of those present led to the further question of why Golkar, which had been the winning party in Ngidiho and was presumed to be the pioneer of development in Indonesia, did not have either a presidential or vice-presidential candidate before this general meeting of the MPR. This community regretted the fact that Golkar did not provide the leadership of the Indonesian government. The economic crisis that had just occurred in Indonesia did not influence their judgment. The majority of the farmers who produce copra had not experienced the negative impact of the Indonesian crisis. On the contrary, they benefited from the collapse of the rupiah since they could sell their copra at a very high price on the world market. The frustration and despair expressed by this audience raised questions about the political and material conditions in Ngidiho that affected the people's response to the May 1999 general election in Galela.

5.1.1. Golkar and the 1999 Political Map in Ngidiho

There are several phenomena which suggest that kin-networks played a strong role in determining which political parties individuals chose. In Ngidiho, Golkar won the 1999 general election with 114 votes from the total of 194 votes. The second was the PPP with 49 votes. The third was the Justice Party (*Partai*

[196] PDI-P won 33% of the 1999 votes. It dominated the seats in the MPR. The remaining seats were divided between Golkar, PPP, PKB and the party of Reformation. The position of the PDI-P as the winner of the general election highlighted the issue of gender that was then used by the Islamic parties to force a compromise which resulted in Megawati not becoming the fourth president of Indonesia.

[197] Tthe next day, October 21, 1999, we could not watch the live recording of the vice presidential election because the electricity went off. However, a few people gathered in the house of *Oom* Din where I was staying and together with them we followed the process of the election through the radio. The result was that Megawati won against Hamza Has who was nominated by the PPP. Megawati was nominated by the PKB. The partnership of Gus Dur and Megawati then lasted a little more than a year. On July 23, 2001, the MPR impeached Gus Dur and installed Megawati as the fifth Indonesian President. Megawati ran for the next presidential election, in September 20, 2004 with Hasyim Muzadi as her vice presidential running mate, however they lost the election to Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and Jusuf Kalla, both of whom were former Ministers in Megawati's Cabinet.

Keadilan=PK) with 24 votes. PDI-P was fourth with 18 votes. The rest were divided between three new parties: the PKB with 6 votes, the Krisna Party with 5 votes, and the Democratic Love the Nation Party (*Partai Demokrasi Kasih Bangsa*=PDKB) with 2 votes. Among the 114 Golkar votes, 100 came from 33 families, 27 Muslim families and 6 Christian families. The additional votes for Golkar came from 14 families, whose members also chose the PPP, PK, PDI-P, PKB and Krisna Party. The 49 votes for the PPP came from 36 homogeneous Muslim families. 11 homogeneous Muslim families also chose Golkar. Of the 16 votes for the Justice Party, 6 were from homogeneous Muslim families and 8 were from just 2 Muslim families whose members also chose Golkar and the PPP. The 13 votes of the PDI-P included 3 from homogeneous Muslim families, 1 from a homogeneous Christian family, and 4 votes from 1 Muslim and 1 Christian heterogeneous families whose members also chose Golkar. 3 homogeneous Muslim families supported the PKB with the additional votes from 3 Muslim heterogeneous families whose members also chose Golkar. 3 homogeneous Christian families and 2 heterogeneous Christian families, whose members also chose Golkar, supported the Krisna Party. The PDKB was supported by 1 homogeneous Christian family and 1 heterogeneous Christian family who members also supported the PDI-P.

From this data, we can draw several conclusions. First, there was mixed voting in both Christian and Muslim families whose members chose their parties according to their own priorities. This phenomenon shows the development of democracy at the level of the family where the members are not forced to choose the same party. Even though the number of votes for the small parties was few they still voted for the party of their choice.

The second phenomenon relates to the choice of open parties that were not limited by a particular religion. This can be seen in the number of votes for the PDI-P that include both Muslims and Christians. Votes for parties that were based on a particular religion came only from members of that religion. However the vote shows that family was still the primary variable in voter patterns. Families became the political target for various parties. Political parties made many promises directed to families during the campaign. The most prominent discourse concerned the improvement of living conditions for families at the village level. For example, the people saw Golkar as the leader of national development. Its campaign elicited support by reference to development projects and promises of further ones. Two Islamic parties, PPP and PK, both increased their share of the vote by campaigning in the same way as Golkar. There were few supporters for PKB (Gus Dur) which gained a large following in Java. PAN (Amien Rais) received no votes in Ngidiho.

People in Ngidiho supported Golkar and former president Suharto. The Muslims in Ngidiho told me that they did not like the way Amien Rais dropped Suharto. They supported Suharto and were angry when he was forced out of office because they had benefited from development projects he had initiated, such as the Presidential Instructions (*Instruksi Presiden* or *Inpres)* concerning agriculture and schools. Amien Rais' attack on President Suharto led the community to change

the meaning of the acronym "P.A.N." from *Partai Amanat National* (National Mandate Party) to *Partai Anak Nakal* (Bad Boy Party). They also created a meaning for PAN in the Galelan language, *Pang Dauku Ka* that means the black bottom of a frying pan. The acronym PAN was associated with the word *pang* which means a frying pan and is pronounced "pan." This play on words shows the feeling of the community and that they believed this new party was already dishonest. Similar mockery was made of the PKB which was called the Blind Kiai Party (*Partai Kiai Buta*). [198]

5.1.2. The Victory of Golkar in the North Moluccas

The success of Golkar in the North Moluccas in the Reformation era cannot be separated from the success of Golkar in the whole region of Eastern Indonesia. One of the factions of Golkar, *Kaukus Iramasuka*, was able to bring about this success of Golkar in the regions of Kalimantan, Sulawesi, Maluku and Irian Jaya. *Kaukus Iramasuka* is the abbreviation used for the Eastern Region namely Irian, Maluku (the Moluccas), Sulawesi and Kalimantan. *Iramasuka* was first proposed in 1979 as a forum for sports, to create friendships among youth people and students in the region. However, the New Order government blocked it because Suharto feared that it might be used to create political solidarity and threaten national integration. The New Order feared regional movements that were organized in the Moluccas, Southern Sulawesi, Northern Sulawesi and NTT. Of course their primary fears were of independence movements in East Timor, Irian Jaya and Aceh. [199]

In the Reformation era, the *Iramasuka* forum was reactivated in Manado, Northern Sulawesi on March 24-26, 1999. The leaders of Golkar claimed that this forum would stimulate national development in the eastern region of Indonesia, however their political motivations were clear. The Golkar campaign in Eastern Indonesia during 1999 used the name of B. J. Habibie as its political center since he is from Sulawesi. The success of Golkar in Eastern Indonesia contributed to the suprising result that nationally Golkar won the second highest number of votes after PDI-P.

In the North Moluccas, the results of the 1999 election for the regional parliament (DPRD Tingkat I) were as follows[200]:

Golkar,	16 seats
PPP,	7 seats
PDI-P	7 seats
PDKB	2 seats
PAN	1 seat
PP	1 seat
PK	1 seat
Krisna Party	1 seat

[198] *Kiai* refers to a Muslim religious leader.
[199] See *Kompas* (April 6, 1999). In Chapter IV I have already explained about several political movements that were organized in the period 1950-1959 in Sulawesi and the Moluccas.
[200] See *Ternate Pos* (August 10-16,1999).

PDI	1 seat
PKB	1 seat
PSII	1 seat
PBB	1 seat.

The success of Golkar resulted in the Sultan of Ternate, Mudaffar Sjah, the head of the Committee for Regional Organization (DPP) becoming the head of the Regional Legislature (*DPRD Tingkat I*). Mudaffar Sjah is the son of the former Sultan of Ternate, Usman Sjah who is discussed in Chapter IV. After 1965, Usman Sjah and his family returned to Ternate (van Fraassen: 1999, 60).[201] The political career of Mudaffar Sjah in Golkar began in 1971 when he was a Golkar representative in the Regency level parliament (DPRD Tingkat II). In 1977 he was elected as a Golkar representative in the national parliament (DPR) (van Fraassen: 1996,60).

The supporters of Mudaffar Sjah as a 1999-2003 candidate for the provincial parliament (DPRD I) included members of Golkar, PDI-P and small parties such as the Krisna party, PDKB and PP. It seems contradictory that supporters of the PDI-P as an anti status-quo party, supported Suharto's Golkar Party. However, the supporters of PDI-P wanted to pay for the good services which the Sultan of Ternate had given to Megawati Sukarnoputeri. In 1995, during the Suharto period when the leadership of Megawati was banned, the Sultan of Ternate helped her to talk freely with her supporters at the Sultanate Palace. The security provided by the Sultan was for political services that Megawati had given him.[202] Those from the small parties who supported the Golkar candidate also saw Golkar as less threatening than PPP or one of the other strict Muslim parties. The same assessment applied to the Krisna Party[203] and the PDKB[204] who found it easier to cooperate with Golkar. The Unity Party (*Partai Persatuan*=PP), which was also an Islamic party, resulted from an internal conflict with PPP.[205]

The centre organization of Golkar in Jakarta appointed the Sultan of Ternate as Head of the DPD-Golkar in the North Moluccas. The Sultan formed cadres within Golkar by using party functionaries who had positions in the government bureaucracies, leaders of social organizations, and leaders of functional

[201] Bureaucratization by the colonial government decreased the sovereignty rights of Ternatese Sultan. During the Japanese occupation, the anti-Dutch movement caused to the family of the Sultan to flee to Australia. In the Old Order period, after the dissolution of the Eastern Indonesia State, and the rise of the Southern Moluccan Movement (RMS), the central government in Jakarta removed the Sultan of Ternate from power because he was assumed to support that movement. He was pulled in to strengthen the Internal Affairs Department in Jakarta. After his retirement, he stayed in Jakarta. See the further details in Chapter IV.

[202] See Ternate Pos (August 10-16,1999).

[203] Krisna Party is the abbreviation for the National Christian Party of Indonesia. Although this party was labelled Christian it is based on Pancasila. The Krisna Party was formed on May 20, 1998. PP and several Islamic parties, based on Islam, were created on August 3, 1998.

[204] PDKB is the abbreviation of Party Democracy Affection Nation (PDKB), which bases on Pancasila.

[205] PP is the abbreviation for the Unity Party (*Partai Persatuan*). PP, which is bases is on Islam; it was formed in January 1999 as a split-off from the PPP. There was a leadership competition between Naro and Hamza Has. See Kompas (March 6, 1999).

organizations (cf. Samugyo: 1982, 112). The Sultan formed links with the social leadership in order to increase public support for the party in his region. As a social leader, the symbolic sovereignty of the Sultan of Ternate enabled him to mobilise people to trust Golkar. Golkar campaigned in North Moluccas for the region's right to become an independent province, separate from Ambon. Governmental reform under Habibie highlighted the development of North Moluccas as a means to strengthen political relationships between Golkar, the society in the region and his government.[206] Moreover, the government seemed to be forcing the implementation of the regulation (UU) for regional development of the Moluccas and Irian Jaya, before the general election in 1999. However the plan could not proceed because of technical obstacles.[207] The social elite had discussed the idea of the separation of North Moluccas from Ambon as early as 1964.[208] However, the government of Suharto saw the idea of separation as a threat to national integrity. Therefore the idea of separation between North Moluccas and Ambon was not on the agenda of the New Order government.

Sultan H. Mudaffar Sjah was installed as the Head of the DPRD at the beginning of November 1999, when I was doing my fieldwork in Ngidiho. However, after the violence in North Moluccas, the members of the DPRD I fired him from this position. Akbar Tanjung as the general chairman of Golkar pushed the Indonesian Police to investigate the Sultan to find support for this suspension. Political rivals of the Sultan who competed for the leadership in North Moluccas gave the reports to Akbar Tanjung. The Sultan was condemned as a provocateur who had escalated the conflict between Christians and Muslims because of his political ambitions.[209] His suspension was influenced by the situation in national politics in which Golkar failed to nominate Habibie; this failure also meant that the political promises of the *Kaukus Iramasuka* could not be fulfilled.[210]

At this point, before returning to an explanation of the use of power in the politics of ritual in North Moluccas, I will examine how the use of power has been exercised by national leaderships from the Sukarno era to the eruption of the 1999-2000 violence in North Moluccas. This explanation will help to show the role of commandos in politics.

5.2. The Politics of Integration during the Sukarno Era

The Sukarno government introduced the politics of integration and national identity to the Indonesian people in their struggle for independence from Western and Eastern colonialism. The political identity formed before and after colonialism was different. The political identity that was shaped during the colonial period was related to the achievement of independence. At the beginning of the 20th century the style of Indonesian colonial politics had changed because of the movement in the Netherlands demanding an ethical foreign policy and the

[206] See Republika Online (May 9, 1999).
[207] See Kompas (April 26, 1999).
[208] See (M.S.Djahir:1964).
[209] Bernas (October 9,2000)
[210] A further explanation can be found at the end of this chapter.

resulting success of Abraham Kuyper of the Christian Party. The growth of liberalism in the 19th Century and the creation of a socialist party at the beginning of 20th Century, stimulated the growth of a nationalist movement in the Netherlands East Indies. The nationalists first became organized in 1901 in Java (Vandenbosch: 1933, 52). The twin pillars of national politics and nationalism became entwined, particularly in the region of the Moluccas.

5.2.1. The Pillar of National Politics

The ethical policy emphasized social justice for the indigenous people in the colony. This led to the improvement of education and social prosperity (Vandenbosch: 1933, 252). To achieve such improvement, the colonial government began to support the work of missionaries who could speed up the development of education. In the previous policy, missionaries had not been permitted to be involved with development activities in the indigenous communities for fear of interfering with profits.

Army Vandenbosch described several movements that appeared before the independence of Indonesia. The first movement began with educated, indigenous Javanese who worked for the colonial government. It was organized in Surabaya by Dr Soetomo who then organised the first congress in 1908 (Vandenbosch: 1933, 349). This movement was inspired by Javanese and by 1910 had 40 branches. However it did not reach the whole society. The second movement was that of nationalists who formed the Indian Party in 1912. Its background was the class policy in the social structure in the colonial system. The colonial policy of offering different forms of legal citizenship based on ethnicity was targeted by the Indian Party in their struggle for equality in society.

Another movement was *Sarekat Islam* (Islamic Union or SI). This movement also arose to oppose social inequality in Javanese society. Javanese were employed at middle levels of the colonial bureaucracy and as labourers for Chinese entrepreneurs who benefited from the policy of the colonial government to grant credit for Chinese investments. The Chinese were in a distinct category of law, higher than the "natives" but lower than the Europeans. The SI supported economic access to credit for indigenous Javanese in the management of the batik industry. Moreover, protested the preferential treatment given to foreign elites, such as Chinese, Arabs and Europeans, while the local people remained poor. The government tried to stimulate economic growth in the Netherlands East Indies by giving generous credit to a foreign elite (cf. Carpenter: 1923).

Political language drew from religious and ethnic symbols. The SI combined socialist ideology with religious sentiments, but their struggle was not successful because of their support for violent labour strikes in Java and Sumatera (Vandenbosch: 1933, 343, 346). Other movements concerned with education appeared in Surabaya, Bandung and Yogyakarta. Movements using ethnic labels were organised by young people beginning with the movement of Javanese Youth in 1915. Other youth organisations based on ethnicity included the Sunda Youth, Sumatra Youth, Minahasa Youth, Ambon Youth, etc. (Vandenbosch: 1933, 359).

The women's movement in the Netherlands East Indies also began to take shape after the death of R.A. Kartini in 1904.[211]

5.2.2. Nationalism among the Moluccans

Nationalism using non-religious symbols did not develop in the North Moluccas. Among the Ambonese, a parallel kind of religious nationalism grew that used the symbolism of Christianity to protest against the discriminatory policies of the colonial government at the time. Leirissa reports that in 1947 there were 4000 Moluccans living in different parts of the island of Java. This diaspora was the result of the colonial government policy to organize army units of indigenous people, especially those from the central Moluccas (Leirissa: 1975, 113).

During the same period there was often tension between the KNIL soldiers and the colonial authorities because of the poor economic conditions of the soldiers and their families. Looking to solve this problem, the Moluccans created an organisation called *Mena Moeria* in Magelang in 1915. It aimed to raise support for the education of children from military families. *Mena Moeria* received support from *Ambonsch Studiefonds* (AS), an organisation established in Jakarta in 1909, which provided educational funds for people from Ambon, both those who lived Java and those in the Moluccan archipelago (Leirissa: 1975, 59).

Because the activities of AS was directed to Christians (Leirissa: 1975, 59), an organisation called the Ambon Union (*Sarekat Ambon*=SA) was established for the common people with no religious limitations. The establishment of the SA was originally planned to take place in Surabaya in the early 1920s. However the board of the SA decided to centralise its activity in the Moluccan archipelago where nationalist ideas were not well developed well. In 1923, one of the board members, A. J. Patty, went to Ambon to start their activities. SA in Java worked in cooperation with Budi Utomo and received full support from it.

The people of Ambon and the Moluccas generally welcomed the arrival of the SA (Leirissa: 1975, 65). Its activities developed quickly because it approached the community through the organization of a cooperative and agricultural activities.

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[211] The target of Kartini's movement was the women in Java. She built a special school to educate women commoners. The publishing of her book *Habis Gelap Terbit Terang* (At the End of the Night Comes the Dawn) which was an anthology of her letters to friends aboard, inspired the women's movement in Indonesia. The women's movement was organized in 1928 to try to unite smaller movements and carefully avoid political and religious propaganda. An important issues m for the movement were the polygamy practices in Muslim society in the Netherlands East Indies (Vandenboch: 1933, 360). The movement, which targeted both ethnic and religious groups for support at the national level, was formed by Indonesian students who were studying at the Technical College, the Medical College and the Law School. On October 28, 1929 in Batavia, there was a second Congress of Indonesian Youth that supported the Indonesian movement without using religious symbols for political identity. This congress was successful in organizing the Youth Oath (*Sumpah Pemuda*) and sang for the first time the Indonesian National Anthem *Indonesian Raya* (Vandenbosch: 1933, 359). After that, at each meeting this national anthem was sung and helped to build enthusiasm for national awaking among the indigenous people (Vandenbosh: 1933, 352). Young people also formed a nationalist movement with religious ties such as the Committee of Islamic Youth (*Persekutuan Pemuda Islam*) that was created in 1926.

However, the wide support it received created fear in the Ethnic Christian Party *(Christenlijk Ethische Partij)*. Ambonese aristocratic families belonged to this party and they claimed the Moluccas as their political territory. A parallel claim could also be seen in the North Moluccas where the Islamic aristocratic politicians claimed the territory for themselves. The Ethnic Christian Party was related to the organisation of *the Regentenbond*, an organisation of local elites like the *raja patih* (village leaders), and other powerful people (Leirissa: 1975, 65). Therefore, after the arrival of the SA, the *Regentenbond* used its power to ban its activities on the grounds that the SA broke tradition (*adat-istiadat)* (Leirissa: 1975, 68). The colonial government supported the opposition to this party because they had built mutual interests with the aristocratic community in the Central Moluccas.

According to Leirissa, the *Regentenbond* engineered the ban on SA on the pretext that the SA violated tradition (Leirissa: 1975, 71). However, its main purpose was to pressure the colonial government to expell A. J. Patty from Ambon. In the end, Patty returned to Surabaya and left the management of SA in the hands of the local leaders in the city of Ambon. By 1929, there were three nationalist political organisations in the Moluccan archipelago: the *Christenlijk Ambonsch Volksbond* (CAV), made up of Christian cadres from the SA, Sarekat Ambon and Sarekat Islam. CAV was led by a member of the Sarekat Ambon branch in Surabaya (Leirissa: 1975, 98). The membership of Sarekat Islam was directed under the leadership of Sarekat Islam in Yogyakarta (Leirissa: 1975, 76).

The relationship between the Christian and Muslim leaders improved after the Christian leader E. U. Pupella, who held a position in the colonial government, led a protest against a colonial regulation on education. They judged that the regulation did not benefit the private schools, which were managed independently. The regulation was that permission to open schools would be given only if the teachers had proper diplomas (Leirissa: 1975, 92-93). At that time, the only schools that qualified were government schools, for example, in the villages (*desaschool*). The teachers in the private schools did not hold diplomas. This protest opened up the possibility to also run non-Christian schools such as *Muhammadiyah* in the Moluccas.

Expressions of nationalism in the Moluccas surfaced primarily in disputes about education, which was still very expensive for anyone who was not related to the aristocratic families. The political impact of education could also be seen during the time of the Japanese who used Islamic symbolizm against the Christians and sharpened differences between the indigenous people. Nevertheless, E. U. Pupella was an exception to the rule. He was a nationalist Christian leader who worked with Muslim leaders as part of the governmental bureaucracy in the Japanese colonial era (see Chapter IV).

Heterogeneous political interests inspired the nationalist struggle in the Netherlands Indies. The struggle for independence often united people across political, religious, ethnic and linguistic barriers (Rejai: 1991, 48). The presence of the Japanese made the maturing of the Indonesian independent preparation possible. After the defeat of Japan in the Second World War, the Indonesian

leaders immediately proclaimed Indonesian National Independence as a sign that the people were ready to become a free and sovereign state.

5.2.3. National Integration and Pancasila

Sukarno used elements from Javanese cultural discourse to maintain unity and reduce competition among the different ethnic groups in Indonesia (cf. Drake: 1989, 75-80). Drake differentiates between national political integration and nationalism. Conceptually, the politics of integration emphase the mutual aspects that ensure the participation of different parties in national life and government (Drake: 1989, 5). Nationalism awakens patriotic feelings that overcome the particularism of local loyalties by replacing them with loyalty to the whole nation; nationalism has imagined characteristics that can unite people from different religious and ethnic backgrounds (Anderson: 1999, 37-46).

The nationalist leaders were concerned about the uneven implementation of law in the pre-independence period even before the defeat of Japan in the Second World War.[212] The institution preparing for Indonesian independence (abbreviation: *BPUPKI=Badan Pekerja Umum Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia*) began to think in depth about an ideal foundation for the Indonesian state. On June 1, 1945 Sukarno proposed the five principles of Pancasila as the state ideology. Pancasila means 'five foundations'. His speech received support from the members of *BPUPKI.*

Pancasila was developed in several versions. On June 22, 1945, BPUPKI accepted an early formulation of Pancasila known as the Jakarta Charter (*Piagam Djakarta*). The Jakarta Charter stated that Muslims are required to follow Islamic law (*..."dengan berdasarkan kepada ke-Tuhanan, dengan kewadjiban mendjalankan sjari'at Islam bagi pemeluk-pemeluknja"* ("…based on the Deity with the obligation of Muslims to carry out Islamic law."). The Japanese occupation of Indonesia is part of the background of the Jakarta Charter. At that time, the Japanese promoted religious nationalism and directed the hatred of the indigenous people against the Netherlands and all Dutch influences in the Netherlands Indies. However the majority of Muslims, including Muslim parties such as *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU), joined in rejecting the Jakarta Charter, not only because it put Islam in a preferential position, but also because it positioned the

[212] The complexity of society can be seen from the legal systems that were employed in the Netherlands Indies. The courts system differentiated between a European court which applied modern law and family courts that ensured that the Muslim society fulfilled the Shari'a obligations especially those related to divorce (Drake: 1989, 79). Moreover, the colonial government also applied *adat* through the court system. Juliet Lee comments that the implementation of *adat* law was implemented as a political policy to block the extension of religious courts based on Islam (Lee: 1999). However, the only structure of the old government that was not changed by the colonial government was the legal institution by which the Sultan of Ternate was free to use both Islamic law and *adat* law to judge cases that were related to the different backgrounds of the communities. The *adat* system was for non-Muslims and the Islamic system applied to Muslims.

government as responsible for enforcing religious law. Such a postion violated Indonesian Islamic principles of religious tolerance (Feillard: 1999).[213]

The nationalists rejected the Jakarta Charter because they knew that national unity was impossible without respect between the different major religions, i.e. Islam, Christianity, Hinduism and Buddhism (Niswah: 1999). Just one day after the proclamation of Indonesian independent on August 17, 1945, the Committee for the Preparation of Indonesian Independence (*PPKI)* declared that Pancasila (without the controversial Jakarta Charter), was the foundation of the state. The wording of Pancasila was according to the version of the National Constitution 1945 (UUD 1945) which remains till the present. The UUD 1945 contains an introduction and 137 passages. The five principles of Pancasila symbolized the five obligations that are practiced in Islam and the five heroes (*Pandawa*) in the Mahabarata narration of Hinduism (Drake: 1989, 77).

Sukarno invented many rituals, ceremonies, slogans, movements, projects and social activities as a means of propagating Pancasila (Drake: 1989, 77). Acting as a charismatic leader who could unify Indonesia, Sukarno personally developed the idea of political integration without limitations (Cribb and Brown: 1995, 87). The presidential decree of 1959 also ensured presidential powers without limitation as had been the pattern practiced by the Javanese kingdoms. Many authors note a change in Sukarno's leadership style in which he used the discourse about national integrity to centralize political leadership (Drake: 1989, 4).

President Sukarno was able to assume unlimited political power because Supomo had already conceptualized an "integralist" state that ruled out opposition in the name of a total unity based on family relationships. These principles are still enshrined in the 1945 Constitution (*UUD 1945*) (Feith and Castles: 1970, 188). Supomo developed the idea of integralism on the model of the Japanese imperial family (*Koshitu*) in which the Emperor was the spiritual centre for the people of Japan. This model had parallels with the traditional power structure of Javanese Kingdoms in which the relationship of king and people is portrayed as a unity of *kawula-gusti*, similar to the feudal relations between Master and Servant (Supomo in Feith and Castles: 1970 [1945], 189). Sukarno centralized power during the period of "guided democracy" (1959 –1965) in a way reminiscent to the bureaucratic control of the ancient kingdoms in Java (Crouch: 1978, 176). Several revisions of the Constitution between 1950 and 1959 eased the way for the President to centralise power in his own person.[214]

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[213] As a term, "Islamic Nationalism" was used by later political scientists to distinguish between this movement and another nationalist group who supported "Secular Nationalism" (see Ismail: 1995, 47-48). The terms used presently are related to the party colours such as: Communist, Muslim, and Social Democrats (Feith and Castle: 1970). Feith and Castle categorise Sukarno as a radical nationalist. In my opinion, the term "secular nationalism" as used by Faisal Ismail contains a bias as if all nationalist groups outside Islam are secular. In the earlier context where all parties acknowledged their belief in the unity of Deity as the foundation of the state, the term "secular nationalism" as used by Ismail should be reevaluated.

[214] See for example the research of Latief which shows the influences of state regulations (UU negara) in extending the presidential position from Sukarno to the end of the Suharto era (Latief: 1998).

The creation of a temporary *Dewan Pertimbangan Agung* (Supreme Advisor Council) and the simplification of parties through a presidential regulation (Panpres No.7) of 1959 was a way to control national political integration (Samugyo: 1982, 10). The Presidential Decree indicated a transition from a political system that empowered civil society into one that gave a greater role to the military. The military, which had been marginalized by Sukarno, gained more power after the announcement of the emergency law in 1957 (Crouch: 1978). This law explicitly named the President as the Great Revolutionary Commander. The military became the counsellor to Sukarno, who especially rewarded the leftist faction. However tensions between communists, moderate Muslims and pro-western supporters outside Java continued to grow (Andrea and Ra'anan: 1969, 46).

Sukarno manipulated the rewritten Regulations (UU) and declared that they supported cooperation, not conflict between the Representatives of the Legislature (MPR) and the president. This made Sukarno very difficult to remove from office. Finally, in 1963, the MPRS (No III MPRS/1963) appointed Sukarno, the great Revolutionary Leader/ Military Commander, President for Life. This appointment was against the UUD 1945, article 7 that called for the election of the president every 5 years with the possibility of re-election (Latief: 1998). However, only two years later, the 1965 September 30 Movement effectively finished the power of Sukarno. Crouch (1978) writes about two versions of these killings which initiated a dark political period, the mystery of which is still to be revealed.[215]

[215] In one version, the entire plan of the PKI was known by Sukarno (Crouch: 1978, 106). The kidnapping and killing of the seven generals was successful, but the transference of power did not come about according to the plan of the PKI. State power was directly taken over by Major General Suharto who was in charge as the commander of the strategic army unit (*Kostrad*). A second version is based on the analysis of working networks investigating the background of the people who were involved in the bloody violence of this affair. Wertheim has said that only Aidit, Untung, Latief and Supardjo had close relations with Suharto (quoted in Crouch: 1979, 123). They were the members of his group. At the wedding of Untung in 1964, Suharto was present. Untung was his representative in Centre Java during the campaign for the control of Western Irian (Irian Barat). Latief has identified him as a former official in the Diponegoro military division who had fought under the command of Suharto during the revolution. Suharto and Supardjo were in Kolaga together when Suharto was the commander of the fighting troops. Wertheim analysis was based on an interview of Suharto by the American journalist Brackman in 1968. In the interview, Suharto said that he was visiting his son at the hospital on September 30, 1965. In the hospital he met Latief who came not to visit his son but to check for him. Wertheim assumes from this statement of Suharto that the idea that he had indeed received information about the coup plan from his followers is strengthened. He then concludes that perhaps those who killed the generals and massacred the communists were the same group (Crouch: 1978, 124). The research of Wertheim could not go any further because the leaders whom Suharto knew were not brought before the military court (*Mahkamah Militer*). Latief was not permitted to be a witness in court until 1975. Even then his evidence was presented only in written form. Crouch assumes that Latief was intentionally excluded because of the regime's fears that the public might know about the meeting between Suharto and Latief from which they could conclude that Suharto was a friend of the initiators of the movement. However, at that time, the public already knew about the rift which had taken place in the military in 1963 when Suharto opposed Muhammad Yani, one of the general who was killed on September 30. Their dispute was about the role of *Kostrad* (Crouch: 1978, 125). This rift sharpened differences concerning loyalty and ethnicity in the military. The feelings of loyalty that developed between Suharto, Untung and two other colleagues, was based

The different versions of the "G 30 S PKI" and its bloody aftermath raises the question of what do we actually know about the history of Indonesia? Major transitions in power are followed by a rewriting of history from the new ruling party's perspective. Even now, North Moluccan history is being reconstructed to conform with various historical claims that support particular interests in the politics of the region. Indonesian history is rewritten by those in power in order to discredit those whom they have defeated so that they cannot rise again. Secondly, the new regime reevaluates and reconstructs a new history in order to tell the story of the people's identity and past from the perspective of the new historical elite. In the case of Indonesia's political history, it is hard to escape Michel Foucault's conclusion that the truth is a product of power.

5.3. The Politics of Identity in Suharto's 'New Order'

Suharto used national development as a pillar of his political discourse. He arranged and controlled the political system in order to maintain the continuity of the developmental process. The discourse of development and a metaphysical explanation of Pancasila within the Javanese concept of power were a means of rational control.

5.3.1. Students as a Means of Revolution

After the events of September 30, 1965 (*Gerakan 30 September=Gestapu* or *G 30 S PKI*),[216] the power of Sukarno was still strong even though Suharto was in control of the military.[217] The student movement, later called the 1966

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on their Javanese origin and indirectly identified them as outside the circle of Nasution and Yani who were ethnic Sumaterans. The circle of Yani who formed the core of the General Board did not agree with the declaration which made Sukarno long-life president. Therefore those who were loyal to Suharto knew with whom they could ally and build a coalition. By getting rid of the generals who were in the circle of the president, and placing another person trusted by the military outside of that circle, Suharto who was Javanese would not be afraid when a sudden presidential declaration was issued. He could deal with the transformation of power smoothly (Crouch: 1978, 124). From the side of Sukarnoism, the counter revolutionary movement conducted by the army was supposedly related to CIA. It played an important role during the cold war (Crouch: 1978, 97-98). Beyond various conspiracy theories about the bloody movement of September 30, 1965, there are two factors that should be noted. First, the collapse of Sukarno and secondly, the rise of Suharto. At the grassroots level, this moment started a huge massacre that spread through Sumatra, Java and Bali whereever the PKI was engaged with its peasant followers. The number of people who were killed in Java is reported to have been 800,000 and in Bali 100,000. The massacre continued from October 1965 to 1969 (Crouch: 1978; Cribb and Brown: 1978; Robinson: 1995).

[216] See Chapter IV.

[217] Sukarno was still supported by the military branches, which were intentionally separated from the centre of the army (Crouch: 1978, 159). Because the Ppresident was the leader of the revolution, he was the only center. Close partnerships among different forces in the Indonesian military were minimized. Support was received from the naval forces, the Indonesian police and the air forces to limit the power of the army. The political leaders of the NU and the National Indonesian Party (*Partai Nasional Indonesia*=PNI) supported the president, although they also supported the army in the annihilation of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) (Crouch: 1978, 159). Crouch shows that this support was the result of patron-client relationships as developed by Sukarno with his people. Moreover, there was a sign that Sukarno had created space for a political maneuver to benefit from the small parties as the result of the growth of tension between himself

generation, played a crucial role in finally overthrowing Sukarno. There were daily demonstrations and pressure of the students became more severe after the death of Arief Rahman Hakim, a medical student at University of Indonesia and of a senior high school student. Both were shot by the army (*tentara Cakrabirawa*) (Crouch: 1978, 182). The transfer of power from Sukarno to Suharto was speeded up through a letter of instruction on March 11,1966 (*Surat Perintah 11 Maret 1966* or *SUPER SEMAR*). As a result, the MPRS declared that Suharto was the new leader of Indonesia.

5.3.2. The Single Principle and No Opposition

Suharto named his government "the New Order" after he took power. This term differentiated his rule from the regime of Sukarno, which he called "the Old Order." In the new social-political situation, the military was seen as the creator of order (Samugyo: 1982, 10). The goal of the New Order was to strengthen the building of the nation based on Pancasila and the UUD 1945 to achieve democracy and development. Suharto rewrote the history of Indonesia, especially the genealogy of Pancasila (see Suharto: 1979; Notosusanto: 1983). In the version of the "palace historians," Muhammad Yamin was credited as the designer of Pancasila, rather than Sukarno (Risakotta: 1995b). The new version pictured the centre of Indonesian modern history as beginning in 1965. A particular vision of the past was evoked to direct the road to the future.

The New Order inherited two perceptions of Pancasila from the two versions of the Constitution: UUD 1945 and the Jakarta Charter. To control the implementation of Pancasila, the New Order merged all the political parties and their ideologies into just two parties, PDI and PPP (Hadiz: 2001). The aim was to retain all the unique characteristics of the parties but in the form of permanent coalitions (Samugyo: 1982, 12). The parties' merger was codified in a regulation about political parties and the Government Working Group (*Golongan Karya* or *Golkar*) (See UU No.3/1985). Golkar was formed on October 20, 1964 as a social organisation, a non-political party. However, it became the political machine of the New Order, a kind of super party for those in power.

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and the army. Therefore, the army tried to get support from the groups of parties that were oppressed under the leadership of Sukarno. The military built support from Masyumi and PSI (Crouch: 1978,179). The Indonesian Islamic Student (*Pelajar Islam Indonesia*=PII), which was a Masyumi influenced organisation and led by Husni Thamrin, with the student organisation in Jakarta (KAMI), began to demonstrate their support of the army. KAMI, which means the Unity Action of Indonesian Students (*Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Indonesia*=KAMI), was formed by anti-communist the student organisations at a meeting at the house of the Minister of Education, Brigen Sjarif Thajeh (Crouch: 1978, 165). At the meeting, the National Indonesian Student Movement (*Gerakan Mahasiswa National Indonesia*=GMNI) which was affiliated with PNI refused to accept The Indonesian Student Association (HMI) which became a target group of communists, nationalists, and the September 30 movement (Crouch: 1978, 165). Nevertheless, despite the disunity of student groups they all used the slogan of Tritura as their organizational agenda. "Tritura" is the abbreviation for three demands of the people (*Tri Tuntutan Rakyat*), that there be a decreased in prices, the dissolution of the PKI and the dissolution of the cabinet (Crouch: 1978,166). On January 10, 1964, thousands of students gathered at the front of the Medical School of the University of Indonesia to shout their slogans.

According to Verdi Hadiz, the New Order's definition of democracy as "Pancasila Democracy" and its elimination of the power to form political parties or a political opposition shows a continuation of the "guided democracy" that was alive in the Old Order era (Hadiz: 2001). The New Order practiced a concept of democracy based on mutual cooperation, community self-help and harmony, rather than fair competition among political parties. To fulfil its political agenda, the New Order passed a regulation (UU no.1-8 1985) that made Pancasila the state ideology and the only legal foundation for all Indonesian organisations. The elimination of political differences was to avoid the conflict and brutality characterized general election campaigns. According to Samugyo, however, conflicts in the general elections occurred because there were the big gaps between voters who were not experienced in the process of cadre formation (Samugyo: 1982, 6). Since political parties had no power to create public opinion in opposition to the government, the campaigns were transformed into public demonstrations of physical force and masculine display.[218]

5.3.3. Economic Modernisation and Developmental Projects

The New Order wove together institutionalization, economic development and distribution of wealth. Institutionalization through networks of functionaries was one way to create social stability. The government carried out and evaluated

[218] The research of Samugyo shows the inequality of facilities between Golkar and the two other parties. As the state organ, Golkar was well supplied with materials and human resources in order to plan and effect public opinion. Its followers acquired capability and maturity in politics. Therefore it received most of the votes. I have already discussed the success of Golkar in the North Moluccas. The campaigns of the PDI were determined by the abilities of the orators (Samugyo: 1982, 110). The forming of cadres in the PPP was not realised so there were substantial differences within itself. The interest of party failed because of the larger personal interests of the different groups, which had emerged. PPP was a coalition between NU, Muslimin Indonesia, Perti and PSII (Samugyo: 1982,117). The break-up within the PPP could be seen in the transformation of the *fatwa* (religious instruction) that was issued in 1977 and changed in 1987. In 1977, K.H.Bisjri stated that:

"… barang siapa diantara umat Islam yang menjadi peserta Pemilu, tapi tidak menusuk tanda gambar PPP, karena takut kehilangan kedudukan atau mata pencaharian maupun sebab-sebab lain adalah orang yang meninggalkan hukum Allah" (dikutip dalam Samugyo: 1982,168).

" …As election participants those in the Muslim community who do not punch the sign for the PPP because of feeling threatened by the loss of position or economic resources or for other reasons, are people who have deserted God's law (quoted in Samugyo: 1982,168).

However in 1987, another *fatwa* was issued that said:

" wajib mencoblos PPP, tidak haram mencoblos Golkar and PDI" (dikutip dalam Samugyo: 1982, 167).

"[Muslims] must vote for the PPP, but it is not forbidden to vote for Golkar or the PDI" (quoted in Samugyo: 1982, 167).

According to Samugyo, these different *fatwa* have to be understood in the context of the existence of NU and PPP. In 1977, NU was still joined together with the PPP so that the *fatwa's* aim was to encourage the traditional voters. In 1987, the *fatwa* assumed that the traditional voters would choose Golkar or the PDI instead of the PPP. This *fatwa*, ensured that the NU's voters in Eastern Java would be influenced by the efforts to deflate the PPP (Samugyo: 1982, 167). In the circle of the PDI, since the beginning of the 1990s, the name of Megawati Sukarnoputri was targeted to increase the popularity of the party. However, according to observers, to maintain the unity of state party the goverbment intentionally created dissension within the party. The attack on the headquarters of the PDI on July 27,1996 showed the way violence was practised by the New Order government.

Indonesian development plans according to the "Five Year Developmental Plans" (*Repelita*). The three foundations of development (*Trilogi Pembangunan*) were security, development and distribution. In the period from 1964 to 1970 the emphasis was on maintaining national stability while the institutionalization of the government was strengthened.

The government established institutional order through both the civil bureaucracy and the military. For civil institutions, the New Order government created a sense of loyalty among civil servants through an organisation called KORPRI, the Corps of the Republic of Indonesia Civil Services (Hill: 1994, xxvii). The government required that the KORPRI uniform be used by the civil services throughout Indonesia. The military had a dual role, both to protect the state and also to be a political force to maintain the New Order government (Hill: 1994, xxii - xxiii, 7-9). The government appointed commanding officers from the military as General Inspectors in government offices and the state business institution (*Badan Usaha Milik Negara*= BUMN). These military officers headed regional and regency governments. At the village level, the position of *babinsa* was established to control village government and to ensure that the community chose Golkar in the general elections (Singh: 2000, 8).

With the political situation under control, Suharto hoped for continuious development consistent with the five year plans. Jeffrey A. Winters examines how institutionalisation in the field of economics allowed for control of income resources (Winters: 1996). The 1970s and 1980s were boom years for Indonesian oil. In this period, according to Winters, the surplus of oil income should have been used to strengthen resource development and pay for the state investment that had already been made. Instead, the income was used for personal gain (Winters: 1996, 41). Winters shows how the economic structure of power in the government protected the interests of the Suharto family.[219]

The benefits of the oil boom were used less for serving society. Economic projects, which required large investments were in the hands of Indonesian-Chinese as they had been in the colonial era. The policy of *Berdikari*, an acronym for "standing on your own two feet" (*Berdiri di atas kaki sendiri*) emphasised ethno-nationalism and was introduced by the Old Order regime to help indigenous Indonesians. The Chinese were marginalized by being denied access to most sectors of Indonesian society except the economic sphere.[220] Chinese investors

[219] In the process of planning the income of the state from oil, the government formed Team 10, which was not structured under *Bappenas,* the National Planning Institution. *Bappenas* was responsible for designing the patterns of national development. Indonesian technocrats who were known as "the Berkeley Mafia" because many were graduates of the University of California, Berkeley, were appointed to lead *Bappenas* and to hold such strategic positions as Minister of Finance. Team 10 was directly under the Secretary of State, which was held by Sudarmono (Winters: 1996, 133). Sudarmono was a military officer assigned to governmental office. Therefore Hill was right in calling the military officers *cukong*, which means 'boss' (Hill: 1994, 34). Team 10 reported directly to the Secretary of State or the President (Hill: 1994, 131). This economic structure maintained the Suharto family's access to income from state oil resources.

[220] The marginalisation of ethnic Chinese included the denial of their right to own land or participate in government. However both Dutch and Indonesian governments gave preferential

returned to Indonesian economic activity under the Suharto government. The result of this policy was the economic marginalization of Islamic indigenous actors (Hefner: 1998a, 226). The government began to emphasize indigenous, grass-roots, economic growth by allowing the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) become involved in development projects in Indonesia. One of the projects of the ADB was the Small Coconut Development Project (*SCDP*), which took place in Galela.[221] This plan to develop coconut hybrids spread among the farmers in the region before the arrival of the banana export agribusiness.

Development projects in Eastern Indonesia began with the cooperation and funding of the ADB. Several studies of the impact of large investment projects in Java and the Moluccas have been carried out. In the Moluccas, the projects were mainly successful because long-term cultivation plans for export were introduced to farmers. In Java, farmers were trapped by the limitations of rice cultivation and the agricultural credit system that seriously affected them during the economic crisis of 1997. The system of credit (in U.S. Dollars) organised by the government agency Bulog, caused grave suffering among the farmers in Java when the Indonesian currency collapsed.

Pictures 45-46: A ship waits to finish the loading of banana boxes before it sails to Japan, Taiwan or China.

In 1980 the Indonesian government invited investors to invest in Eastern Indonesia. The invitation was taken up at the beginning of the 1990s (cf. Barlow and Hardjono: 1996). The ADB coconut project transformed the developmental model of the people to an export orientation. The development of Eastern Indonesia helped fulfill the governments obligation to pay attention to equal distribution, as stated in the three goals of Indonesian development. However, the export and free market orientation adopted by the government resulted in strong pressure on the farmers to sell their land cheaply to the banana company, PT GAI. This laid the groundwork for the social chaos of the violence. Visser has reported the same lack of benefits and suffering that occurred when the people in Irian Jaya were forced to give up their rich land (Visser: 2001). At the grass-roots level

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treatment for non-indigeneous Indonesians (especially Chinese, Indians and Arabs) to participate in business.

[221] See Chapter III.

communities are changed by the activities of companies that are not directly subject to the development plan. Yunus Ukru and his friends from a non-governmental organisation published tragic case studies about the marginalizing of the indigenous people in the archipelago of the Moluccas extending from North Moluccan areas such as Tobelo, Sahu, Modole, Sawai, Bacan, to the Central Moluccas including Buru, Huaulu, Waemale, and to the Southern Maluccas as far as the South East, Evav-Atnabr Evav, and Jarjui (Panjaitan and Topatimasang: 1993).

In the 1980s there appeared to be different of goals in various government development policies. After President Suharto appointed B.J. Habibie as the minister of Technology and Research to design models for middle industrial development that could be achieved in Indonesia, there was competition between the model developed by Bappenas and that of Habibie. The Habibie model, which emphasized the advance of technology and the growth of heavy industry, was not supported by Bappenas (Tjondronegoro: 1995, 72-73). The resulting tension not also involved a dispute between two different developmental ideologies but also became politicised by differences in religion. The Habibie group used the acronym for the Moluccan independence movement, RMS (Republic of Southern Maluku), as a slur against three prominent Christian officials associated with Bappenas, namely, "*Radius, Mooy, Sumarlin*". Thus Habibie associated religion with power conflicts over differences in developmental ideology. Bappenas, at the time, was filled with economists who were *abangan* Muslims and Christians. The three "RMS economists" were from Christian backgrounds, both Catholic and Protestant (cf. Bahtiar Effendy: 1998).

The center of the RMS political rebellion was in Ambon where the majority were Christians. In 1999, RMS again became associated with Muslim-Christian conflict in the Moluccas and was even applied to the conflict in the North Moluccas. Historically the RMS movement never reached the northern part of the Moluccas, although Sukarno was suspicious that the Sultan of Ternate (a Muslim) supported the RMS.

According to Robert Hefner, Habibie was expected to bring Indonesia to a high level of industrial development, which would provide the middle class with work (Hefner: 1995a). This expectation grew among middle class Indonesians centralised in Jakarta and they used their Islamic affiliation as a new identity expressed in the Association of Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals (ICMI); this organization supported Habibie as a candidate for national leadership. However, it should be noted that many Indonesian economists were doubtful about the developmental model dreamed up by Habibie. To build projects such as the National Airplane Industry (IPTN), the state had to invested more than it received. In the Reformation era, the large size of the IPTN debt has been discovered. The construction of IPTN used resources which had been designated for other projects such as reforestation.[222]

[222] See Kompas (September 7, 1998).

5.3.4. The Politics of Spirituality

At the same time that political affairs and economics were being institutionized, religion was coming under the same kind of policy. The stated purpose of institutionalizing religion was to avoid conflict and achieve religious harmony in the nation. The government issued several regulations to direct regulate and control religions in Indonesian society. The Ministry of Religious Affairs and society leaders accepted these regulations because of their concern about conversion from one religion to another. After the purge of Communists following the coup attempt in 1965, a large number of nominal Muslims converted to Christianity or Hinduism. Government policy had permitted Christian missionaries to visit political prisoners who, as suspected communists, were under severe pressure to adopt a religion (Hefner: 1995a, 22). However, in later research, Hefner noticed that some people who had converted to Hinduism or Christianity had already reconverted to Islam.

The Indonesian state only acknowledged Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism and Buddhism as valid recognized religions. In 1973, MPR tried to propose local religious practices (*aliran kepercayaan,* which especially refers to Javanese mysticisms) as another authorized religion. However, the Muslim community rejected this proposal (Hefner: 1995a, 7). For the government, religious formalism aimed at controlling the society; however, many Indonesians found these regulations intrusive and detrimental to harmonious relations between religious believers.

Religious formalism that is intended to control the religions, actually can become a boomerang. Enforcing a single religious identity creates homogeneity. Homogeneity is created when the majority forces minorities to conform to the religious identity of the majority. The government created policies with which the majority agree in order to influence public opinion, but the result is not always what is expected. In the 1970s and 80s, the Javanese elite searched for spiritual power and identity through ancestral rituals. Javanese mysticism was used as a means of political legitimation. Pemberton has described the efforts of the New Order government to revive Javanese religious ritual as a source of power (Pemberton: 1994). He states that in the period before the 1990s, government spent many resources in renovating old graveyards of kings and Javanese families in the regions of Central and East Java. In this period, people close to Suharto practiced Javanese mystic meditation (*kejawen*) while also practicing Islam in order to find revelation that could become input to Suharto for leading the state.

Suharto himself was acknowledged as a *pandita* (religious leader) who had received a revelation that he should lead the state (Singh: 2000, 20). In this context, power is considered a unity that comes from one divine source. Pancasila formulates the source of all power as a great unity (*Ketuhanan yang Maha Esa*). Just as Divine power is unified, so political power must be unified in the person of a single leader (cf. Singh: 2000,20). The New Order government institutionalized the power of the state as single and homogeneous.

Islamic politicians saw Suharto's politics of spirituality as an effort to divert the attention of the middle class from politics. According to Ismail, among Muslim politicians, Suharto treated Pancasila like a religion (Ismail: 1995). Suharto was also close to the followers of *kejawen* (Javanese mysticism) and to the Catholics who established the research institution and think-tank called CSIS (Hefner: 1995a). Islamic politicians categorized CSIS and the New Order government as having an Islam phobia (Singh: 2000, 170). Nevertheless, the government also built Islamic institutions such as the Council of Indonesian Ulamas (*Majelis Ulama Indonesia*), the Coordinative Institution of Islamic Brotherhood (*Badan Koordinasi Ummat Islam*) and through the foundation of the Mosque Board (*Yayasan Dewan Mesjid*) built a large numbers of mosques throughout Indonesia (Hefner: 1995a, 122).[223]

5.3.5. Using Islam to Block the Rise of Sukarnoism

Many people were surprised when in December 1990, President Suharto, dressed completely in traditional *santri* (strict Muslim) clothing, opened the first congress of ICMI (Hefner: 1995b, 1). Hefner says that the birth of ICMI came from the pure motivation of five students of the Muhammadiyah University in Malang who organised the meeting among leading Islamic thinkers and leaders from the whole

[223] The whole legal system was unified, modified and centralised in the National Law and national court system which had already replaced the traditional courts and local institutions (Drake: 1989, 79). The government issued UU No.5 1979 concerning traditional law. The increase in the use of religious courts resulting in their separation from the state courts. The efforts of the government to homogenise the law on marriage and divorce by limiting the authority of Islamic courts was rejected by Muslims (Hefner: 1995a,7). However, the UU No.5 1979 about the limitations of traditional law was reviewed in the Reformation era (see, Sjah. In: Bernas, Dec.13, 1999). The model of spiritual politics was the hegemonic political model of the Suharto government. Nung Runua explains that the impact of this political system created fears among the supporters of Golkar as to who could be a candidate for president (Runua: 1992, 44). This was taboo! (Runua: 1992, 47). It was believed that mentioning the name of another candidate for president could "create misunderstanding." For example, another candidate might not fit the expectations of the current president. It could be that the society wanted another name to be nominated, but they were afraid that Suharto would be the proposed candidate. A week before the general election in 1992, the name of the presidential candidate from Golkar had not yet been announced. Rumours about the name of the presidential candidate caused nervousness and uneasiness in several political leaders from small parties. They came to the house of Alam Syah Ratu Prawiranegara, the former Minister of Religion and asked about this matter. However, he could not give an answer except to promise that he would organise a meeting to celebrate Idul Fitri and he would invite all the political organisations to attend the ceremony. This meeting would propose a special prayer for Suharto. According to Alamsyah, when normal methods of communication between human beings is cut off, the only way to communicate is with God. The people's prayer indirectly expressed that every social organisation formally declared support for Suharto. This prayer for national politics was strengthened by the inclusion of 36 names with their signatures that were the leaders of the social organisations. There was one organisation, which refused to sign the list, and that was ICMI. The prayer was neutral. In the prayer, the board leader of Golkar requested the blessing of God for the health of Pak Harto (Suharto) so that he would be in TOPP condition (Runua: 1994, 45). TOPP is the abbreviation of *Tegar* (Strength), *Optimistis* (Optimist), *Prima* (Prima) and *Pasrah* (Submission). The words TOPP appeared in the political prayer as a spiritual satire that was taken as a joke made by Suharto who saw himself as having the qualities of TOPP (Singh: 2000, 9). The word TOPP was used by Suharto in a address at the meeting of the Committee for National Indonesian Youth (KNPI) in 1991 to stand for *Tua* (Old), *Ompong* (Toothless), *Peot* (Battered) and *Pikun* (Senile) (Runua: 1994, 45).

of Indonesia (Hefner: 1995b, 37). The orginal idea was academic and included the desire to promote Islamic spirituality because it was a meeting of Islamic intellectuals. In the end, however, it turned out to have two faces: the practice of Islam and the performance of the New Order. The Congress recognized the new culture of the middle class. The performance of the New Order government was seen to have initiated a genuine new social order. These conclusions then became the vehicle that would be used by Suharto in the 1993 general election. After the official declaration of ICMI, Suharto went on what many observers called a political hajj (Karim: 1999). Bilveer Singh has well described Suharto as being Machiavellian in his use of Islamic religious symbols without committing himself to strict Islamic practice (Singh: 2000).

Hefner explains in depth the new strategies for empowerment that were used by Islamic intellectuals in facing the marginalization of Islam in the New Order policies (Hefner: 1995b). He quotes the thoughts of Nurcholis Madjid who believes that the Muslims need to change their strategy by giving greater emphasis to Islamic inculturation in society. This countered the common political thinking of Islamic politicians who did not consider the structure of Indonesian society when they proposed the concept of an Islamic state. Johan Effendi proposed the same idea after the formation of ICMI. However, history has shown that ICMI was just a hope for these Islamic intellectuals. ICMI soon became involved in hegemonic politics that supported the New Order agenda.

In his wide-ranging explanation of the Indonesian political situation in the 1990s does not even touch on the reappearance of Sukarnoism in the figure of Megawati Sukarnoputri, the daughter of the first Indonesian president (Hefner: 1995b). Later, in his book *Civil Islam*, Hefner discussed Megawati in relation to state politics under the government of Suharto who planned to destroy her popularity (Hefner: 2000, 174 ff). The government feared the political gossip that Megawati was prepared to be involved in the 1997 general election campaign. The PDI, since the forced merger of political parties in the 1970s, had never won in the general elections. Megawati, as the daughter of Sukarno, could be the right person to change their fortunes. Suharto's fears about the reappearance of Sukarnoism in the person of Megawati led him to accept the challenge of ICMI to grant a greater role for Islam in Indonesian politics and especially in the government bureaucracy (Gaffar: 1996, 57).

The relationship between ICMI and the government was based on mutual interests. ICMI was formed in Malang in December 1990. After its promising beginning several members, such as Emha Ainun Nadjib withdrew because there was no freedom to express opinions without making the military and the government angry (Hefner: 1995b; Hefner: 2000, 155). ICMI became vocal through the involvement of Adi Sasono in the think-tank CIDES, a research institute affiliated with ICMI.

The state began to use a politics of terror against its enemies. As ICMI was accepted into the power circle of Suharto, other former political partners such as CSIS were excluded. Anti-Chinese and anti-Christian rhetoric began to be heard.

Militant Islamic groups that seemed to enjoy government protection attacked religious symbols, such as churches. Some people called for a political *jihad* against non-Muslims, based on evidence that non-Muslims in the state had acted violently against Islamic groups. In particular, Benny Moerdani was accused of the slaughter of Muslims at Tanjung Priok. The religious identity of a particular state officer was used to legitimatise violence against members of the larger society that share the same religion.[224]

Suharto seemed to succeed in maintaining his hegemonic power by using political violence to terrorise his political rivals. However when the economic crisis occurred, the same Islamic organizations that Suharto used for his own political purposes rose up and, along with other social forces, defeated the New Order government. Islam becomes one of the pillars of power that would need to be taken into account in the present and future political democracy in Indonesia.

5.4. The Economic Crisis and Scenarios to Overthrow Suharto

The economic crisis that shook South East Asia in the middle of 1997 erupted in Indonesian politics. Indonesian investors had to repay their debts in American Dollars. The economic crisis began in Thailand and quickly spread to Indonesia. As both domestic and international confidence in Suharto's government reached an all time low, the Indonesian rupiah collapsed. In one year the Indonesian currency plunged from Rp. 2,000 to the US dollar to Rp. 14,000 to the dollar. The government repeatedly intervened in the market but to no avail. The government reserve of foreign exchange could never match the depth of the crisis. In additions to the economic factors, I will consider the political aspects that led to the collapse of Suharto and the creation of a new government.

5.4.1. The Unity of Various Interests

In the presidential election of 1997, Suharto was re-elected in partnership with B.J. Habibie as the Vice President (Singh: 2000). After reelection, Suharto rejected the cabinet suggestions of ICMI. On the contrary, many cabinet posts were given to Suharto's friends and relatives, including his daughter, Tutut Indra Rukmana. Tutut became Minister of Social Affairs. In the face of this political reality, ICMI felt that Suharto had used the organisation for his own purposes.

The collapse of Suharto was caused by a combination of political conspiracies and popular revolution (Singh: 2000, 99). Suharto was overwhelmingly reelected in

[224] Hefner discusses the involvement of the army in political violence such as that which occurred under the leadership of Benny Moerdani in the slaughter of Muslims in Tanjung Priok (Hefner: 2000, 185ff). A coalition between Prabowo, who had been a part of the Indonesian military, and Ahmad Sumargono from the Committee for Indonesian Solidarity with the Islamic World (*KISDI*) blamed the political violence led by Moerdani for the attack on the Christian community in Situbondo in 1996. The reason for choosing Situbondo was related to efforts to destroy the popularity of the moderate Islamic leader, Gus Dur. The appearance of Megawati as the leader of the PDI-P in which there were nationalists with different religious affiliations also became the target of state politics. The religious political rhetoric that supported state legitimacy evoked the involvement of the army in its attack on the headquarters of PDI-P on July 27, 1996.

October 1997, but after just seven months in office, he was forced to resign. The efforts the had been made through approaching religious leaders and social activists were not successful. Who were the people who arranged this and how did they do it?

According to the mass media, Amien Rais as the leader of Muhammdiah was the most visible critic of the New Order. Gaffar reports that ICMI supported Suharto in the presidential election of 1997 (Gaffar:1996). The ICMI members could hardly believe that after ICMI led the puppet show of the 1997 elections they were completely ignored by Suharto in the appointment of national leadership (Gaffar: 1996, 52).

According to Singh, Adi Sasono was one ICMI leader who intentionally planned the mass movement of students that brought about the collapse of Suharto. However, support for the struggle also came from groups outside the students, such as traditional Islamic organisations (e.g. NU), Modernists, Nationalists, Sukarnoists, Catholiks, Protestants, Hindus, Buddhists, Socialists, former generals, the mass media, and many other social elements (Singh: 2000, 149). The people's movement looked natural and spontaneous. It included leaders from many groups who supported the protesters. However this was a political scenario that was also planned (Singh: 2000, 15; cf. Chapter II).[225]

Jakarta and Yogyakarta were the central cities where the student movement pioneered the protests which tied-up the entire nation (Singh: 2000, 55). The DPD Golkar of Yogyakarta had even rejected the re-nomination of Suharto before the 1997 general election. On the 21st of May 1998 I joined an estimated crowd of 500,000 protestors who filled the squares (*alon-alon*) and streets of the Sultan's palace, one day before Suharto was forced to resign. The event included political orations, satires of President Suharto and a speech by Sri Sultan Hamengkubuwono X. The people were united by their common belief in the need

[225] After four students from Trisakti University died on May 12, 1998, many societal leaders arrived at the demonstrations to speak and to show their sympathy for the loss of these flowers of the struggle. Most Indonesians reacted to the presence of Megawati at the demonstrations as an ascetic who had just come down from a high mountain where she had meditated, however the students shouted their support for her. National leaders who participated in this scenario did not know that they were acting in accordance with the wishes of an architect of the plan. Students were pioneers of the movement, while Adi Sasono lobbied at the higher levels to explain how the movement for change was part of the same process at the grass roots (read: students). The protests of the students became more vocal and militant after the death of the four Trisakti students who were shot by anti-riot troops *(pasukan huru-hara*). It seemed like the political drama of 1966 was occuring again as the students who energized the movement were sacrificed. Several times Sasono threatened Harmoko as the Head of MPR-RI for the period 1998-2003 and Syarwan Hamid who was the Internal Affairs Minister in Suharto's 1998-2003 Development Cabinet, when they refused to believe that an effective process of transformation was taking place at the lower levels. If they would not help Sasono, they would fall with Suharto (Singh: 2000, 125). When there was a parliamentary meeting (DPR) the students occupied the DPR/MPR- RI building to take advantage of the momentum. The press speeded up the collapse by portraying Suharto as the enemy of the entire nation. All over Indonesia people watched the protesters on the streets of several big cities in Java and began to question Suharto's claim that his legitimacy came from God (cf. Singh: 2000, 138). As a result, more and more people dared to be involved in the demonstrations.

to remove Suharto. Along the streets leading to the Palace the protestors received free drinks and snacks, provided by the local merchants.

However the events in Java were only a strange story to the people in Ngidiho and Galela. On the island of Halmahera societal resistance to the influence of the Sultan of Ternate was so high that they submitted to his authority only as long as they received benefits from his administration. They also supported the Suharto regime because it gave them cows and elementary schools. Java was seen as the centre of power from where development was planned and mobilized. However this tradition of politics was shaken by the collapse of Suharto. The fall of Suharto was part of a national political conspiracy that was strange and difficult for the people of Ngidiho to understand.

5.4.2. Reformation: Islam, ABRI and Regional Autonomy

Suharto tried to appease the student movement and its supporters by replacing the cabinet members whom the groups demanding reform disliked and appointing reformers to it; in the end this strategy did not succeed because those he tried to appoint to the ministries rejected the job. The reform groups rejected Bob Hasan, whom he wanted to included in the cabinet. Adi Sasono insisted that it was the task of Habibie to convince President Suharto that he had to resign because there was no longer any political support for him and he had lost God's mandate (Singh: 2000).

On May 21, 1998, Suharto resigned from office and Habibie was installed as the third President of the Republic of Indonesia. The debate over whether his position was legal did not prevent him from running his government for 512 days. Habibie appointed a new cabinet, called the Reformation Development Cabinet. Adi Sasono played an important role as the Minister of Cooperatives because he was trusted by Habibie (Singh: 2000, 156).

In a strong bid to gain popular legitimacy, Habibie reevaluated the developmental ideology of the New Order. Habibie initiated a reconsideration of the double function of the military, the end of political arrests, the freeing of political prisioners, a referendum for East Timor, regional development and regional autonomy. The economic crisis had not stopped development projects, such as airplane manufacturing, even though they were inefficient industrial projects rumored to be full of corruption and very costly to the state. Habibie committed himself to combat KKN (Corruption, Collusion and Nepotism) and agreed to the resignation of his brother and son from their strategist positions.

During Habibie's government *SARA* riots began to spread through the country. The acronym SARA was created by the New Order to stand for conflicts based on ***S****uku,* ***A****gama,* ***R****as dan* ***A****ntar Golongan*, i.e. tribal, religious, racial and inter-group conflicts. In his annual presidential address on Independence day, August 17, 1999, Habibie did not touch on efforts of the government to seriously address the social violence that had already broken out throughout Indonesia. Hendardi, Head of the Association for Legal Help and Indonesian Human Rights (PBHI),

along with Abdul Hakim Garuda Nusantara from the Federation of Indonesian Advocates, and Albert Hasibuan from the National Committee of Human Rights (*KOMNAS HAM*) report that a combined team had carried out careful research about the violence in several places and made a series of recommendations to the President. However the government which did not follow up on the recommendations.[226] At that time, the riots which were labelled "religious" had already been occurring for about eight months in Ambon and the Central Moluccas.

Some theorists suggest that the riots in the Moluccas were part of a chain of political scenarios planned by ICMI before the fall of Suharto.[227] ICMI was supported by parts of the military (Suaedy: 2000). The Habibie government collapsed in the end, in part because of the Bank Bali scandal which involved top leaders of Golkar using the people's money for their 1999 campaign. Habibie's name was still too associated with extensive corruption during Suharto's reign and he never earned the trust of the Indonesian people. Moreover, there was a split within Golkar related to an event which took place before the general election of 1999. The People's Mandate Party (*Partai Daulat Rakyat*=PDR)[228] nominated Habibie and Adi Sasono as the pair to run for president and vice president in the 1999-2003 general election.[229] Golkar then put Adi Sasono onto a non-active status because the PDR had published his picture as a candidate for state leadership before the general election campaign had begun and he was still a member of Golkar.[230]

5.5. The Beginning of a New Chapter for the North Moluccas

How did national political change influence regional development in the North Moluccas in the midst of the Moluccan conflict at large? This sub-section examines ideological connections made with the history of the Moluccas, the rise of Tidore and Makian, the struggles in the provincial capital for the Governor's position, the land dispute in Kao and Malifut, and the beginning of the riots in the North Moluccas.

5.5.1. The Awaking of the North Moluccan History

The Islamic Sultanates traded on the seas throughout the Netherlands East Indies since the 15th Century (Reid: 1993; Hefner: 1998a). The Sultans lost their power to the colonizers, especially the Netherlands. The North Moluccas were increasingly marginalized after the fall of the spice prices. Therefore, the inauguration of the Province of North Moluccas on October 20, 1999, which began with the delivery of a *pataka*, a letter concerning the regional development

[226] See Kompas (October 5, 1999).
[227] Gus Dur suggested the names of officials who supposedly were the provocateurs of the riots in Indonesia such as Adi Sasono, Fuad Bawazier, Ginanjar Kartasasmita and Mar'ie Muhammad but did not directly mention ICMI. See Kompas (July 30, 2000).
[228] The PDR which was based on Pancasila, was formed on January 1, 1999. See Kompas (March 6, 1999). cf. Hefner: 2000.
[229] See Kompas (April 29, 1999).
[230] See Kompas (May 31, 1999).

of the North Moluccas, was read as a sign of the reawaking of North Moluccan glory. The Sultans of Tidore and Bacan were also reinstalled after the inauguration of the Province of North Moluccas. These provincial events were followed by a party for the people (*pesta rakyat*), which was one of the most lively events in the modern history of the North Moluccas. The residents of the North Moluccas participated in an exhibition of traditional shows that brought back the ancient fame of *Maluku-Kie-Raha*. In the ceremony to welcome the caretaker Governor and his group, along with the delivery of the *pataka*, the Sultans of Ternate and Tidore accompanied the local government bureaucrats. Local officials like the Regional Secretary and the Head of the Regency (*Bupati*) most of whom were from Makian, claimed that they were represented by the Sultan of Bacan.

The delivery of the *pataka* represented a meeting of the old powers and the new ones. The reappearance of this ancient ceremony gave a new meaning to the event. One of the rituals performed was called, *joko kaha,* "stepping on the land." This ceremony is performed to welcome important guests who are requested to step on the shore or land, and their feet are washed with water from the earth of the Moluccas. This signifies that the guests have become a part of society. Dozens of *kora-kora* boats, representing the ancient glory of their ancestors during the period of the spice trade, were arranged in a row along the sea coast to show respect to the important guests.

The procession in the welcoming ceremony memorialized the victory of the Ternate Sultanate. The people celebrated their religious spirituality and the greatness of their kingdom by readings from the Qur'ân and to mark the installation of the interim government of the new province. The installation included the giving of a set of traditional clothes and a crown as official symbols of the governor's position which paralleled the sovereignty of the Sultanate in the old period. When the North Moluccas had been part of the Province of the Moluccas with the center of government in Ambon, the position of the Regency of the North Moluccas was not parallel to the historical position of the Sultanate.

The position of Governor is the target of most leaders in the North Moluccas. With the inauguration of the Province of North Moluccas, the people and the local press began to predict who would be the first North Moluccan governor. The caretaker government was to prepare the Province of North Moluccas to control the government independently. The caretaker government was assigned to govern until April 2000, whereas regional autonomy was scheduled to begin on January 1, 2001. However, the new Governor of the North Moluccas wasn't appointed until April 2002, after a year of polemic and disagreement.

5.5.2. The Role of Tidore and Makian Sultanates

The inauguration of the Province of North Moluccas appeared to be open and generous. In fact, it was a public event created to hide the real local politics that were that were still being whipped up at the moment. The political problems

related to particular interest groups which wished to gain power in the North Moluccas. The most critical problems included the location of the provincial capital, who would be the North Moluccan Governor, and how to restore the Sultans of Tidore and Bacan.

The Sultan of Tidore was installed just a few days before the inauguration of the Province of North Moluccas. During the New Order, the Sultan of Ternate had been much more conspicuous than the others. He still maintained his palace tradition even though his power was limited. Regular government functions were carried out by the centrally appointed bureaucrats. During the New Older the Head of the Regency of the North Moluccas was not from the power circle of the Ternate Sultanate. Nevertheless the Sultan of Ternate never disappeared even though he did not have a strong governmental position. He used his symbolic role to win votes for Golkar and was the head of Golkar in the North Moluccas.

The appointments of the Sultans of Tidore and Bacan reawakened the buried history of hundreds of years of decline for the North Moluccas in Indonesian politics. With the beginning of reform, historical reflection opened the question of why the Bacan Sultanate, who was known in ancient history as the Makian Sultanate, had to leave his region and move to Bacan. The Makians remembered the resettlement of the Sultan of Bacan from the island of Makian to the island of Bacan before the arrival of Western traders as a result of the oppression of the Makians by the Ternate and Tidore Sultanates who competed for control of their clove island.[231]

The Bacan Sultanate also argued that the suffering of the Makian people who had been evicted from their original land even prior to colonialism, created uncertainty as a characteristic of the people. The Makians, besides following the Sultanates orders to settle on Bacan, also settled on the island of Tidore and in Gane, which is the region of South Halmahera facing Bacan island. Even before the arrival of the Portugese, warfare had forced the Makians to move to different islands. The VOC recognised the territorial borders of *Maluku Kie Raha*. However, they did not return people to their original territories because the VOC did not recognise genealogically defined regions. The colonial government accepted the request of the Ternate Sultan to maintain the *status quo* because tradition did not prohibit people, as individuals, from living in a region, which they had already inhabited for many generations (Andaya: 1993a, 187). However the Dutch did initiate large scale resettlement when they asked the Makians who were living in Gane to move back to Moti because the colonizers needed them to build a fort in the 17th century (Andaya: 1993a, 153).

The New Order also encouraged migration. The central government initiated transmigration projects to move people from densely populated areas of Java and Bali to less populated areas on other islands. This policy affected the local people in regions that received such transmigrants. In the North Moluccas several areas such as Gane Timur (East Gane), Jailolo and Kao received transmigrants,

[231] See Ternate Pos (November 2-8, 1999).

including the former residents of Makian Island. In 1975, even though some Makians had moved to the district of Sahu, especially in area near the village of Goal, the regency government moved the entire population of Makian Island to Northern Halmahera into the region of Kao. People were moved to the new location in anticipation of the eruption of the volcano on their home island.

The Makians rejected this plan at the beginning because they thought resettlement to Northern Halmahera was difficult. Geographically, the location of Kao in the interior did not guarantee easy transportation from their homeland to the new place. Several Makian families surveyed Kao and decided not to join the transmigration to Kao. Their coconut plantations, inherited houses, and ancestral graveyards were all obstacles to just leaving their homes in the Makian Islands. They wanted to be able to commute from the new location to their homes. Therefore, some people who favoured resettlement chose to move to Bacan and Gane, which are located close to their original island. Many of these people are now successful bureaucrats in the government offices in Ternate.

Resettlement in Gane was the ideal place according to the Makians. Why, then, did the government relocate the Makians to Kao? After the riots in Kao and Malifut that forced the Makian population to leave the area, this became a hot political topic (Tomagola: 2000a, 7). Tomagola suggests that the relocation of the Makians to Kao by the North Moluccan government was to block the expansion Christians in the Central and Southern parts of Halmahera. His opinion is based on the assumption that the struggle was for religiously defined territory. This opinion should be situated in the historical context of religious politics as explained in Chapter IV. Kao was chosen as a transmigration location not only for the Makians but also for Javanese transmigrants who lived in Biang and Toliwang. Javanese Muslims and the Kao people still live together in peace. The difference between the Javanese and the Makians was that the Javanese integrated into the district of Kao whereas the Makians wanted to set up a separate district within Kao territory. The Makians have lived in the territory of Kao since 1975 but the policy to allow an independent district government was introduced just after the inauguration of the new Province of North Moluccas.[232]

However, the indigenous people of Kao did not agree with the government's decision to create a separate district for the Makians. They felt that the government, which included many Makians, discriminated against them. The government provided houses, land, a rice subsidy, crop seeds and a clinic to the Makians in Malifut for almost 10 years. This caused tension with the indigenous Kao who did not receive the same assistance as the Makians. The Makians prospered in Kao, not just because of assistance but because of their hard work talent and social soliderity. However, the prosperity of the Makians in Malifut was considered meaningless by the Makians who settled in Bacan and Gane because they had become disconnected from their ancestral homes which they were supposed to visit regularly.

[232] A further explanation will be found in the end of this chapter.

The relationship to their ancestral land is very important for the Makians, as for most ethnic groups in the North Moluccas, because the land is the place where their ancestors are buried. For the Makians living away from their land, visiting the island of Makian was not only to harvest their produce but also to visit the graves of their ancestors. Because of transportation difficulties in the years before the 1990s, the Makians in Malifut, Halmahera did not have a complete relationship with their home island. After the riots overwhelmed them in August 1999, some Makian leaders reflected that this disaster happened because of their disconnected relationship with their homeland on the island of Makian. [233] Few people realised how great would be the impact of transmigration policy on the life and social-cultural environment of the Makians themselves.

Since pre-colonial times, whenever the Makians were resettled, they had to search again for their political identity as an ethnic group in the North Moluccas. In spite of being scattered they have retained a high degree of ethnic soliderity. In the 1970s they formed the Association of Makian Kayoa Brotherhood as a federation to tie together the Makians whereever they were located. This association meets once a year. The invitation is circulated through the radio. In each place where Makians live there is always a branch of this Association, which meets regularly each month. The benefits of the Association are experienced directly by the people because it is the place where they get information about the recruitment of civil servants for governmental offices or for religious teachers.

5.5.3. Competition for the Provincial Capital and the Governor's Position

The inauguration of the North Moluccas as a Province separate from the Province of the Moluccas centred Ambon, allowed for the liberation of this new province from the hegemonic government in Ambon, which historically had dominated the North Moluccas since the Dutch colonial era. However this liberation also renewed old political sentiments among the ethnic groups, which were inherited from the local competition among the kingdoms in the territory of *Maluku-Kie-Raha*. The colonizers transformed the elite social structure. They established control over the Sultan of Ternate and ensured that other ethnic groups remained under Ternate hegemony. The Indonesian government essentially followed the same policy until 1998, using the Sultan but not granting him any real power. The Makians found new status and identity as civil servants of the government in the era of the New Order.

After the collapse of the New Order, ethnic sensibilities grew rapidly in the North Moluccas. The Makians had already achieved the highest social rank in North Moluccan society because of their success in education and government service. A combination of the genealogical myth of *Maluku-Kie-Raha* and the Makians high social rank brought the Sultan of Tidore to ally with the Makians. However, the Makian-Tidore coalition was not a new phenomenon. During their brief rule, the British granted the Sultan of Tidore the right to control the island of Makian in the place of the Sultan of Ternate (Andaya: 1993a). Being in such a fortunate

[233] An interview with Amran Mustari, a leader of the Makians in Ternate, took place in Ternate in November, 1999.

position, the Sultan of Tidore restored the power of the Sultan of Moti in Jailolo and the Sultan of Makian in Bacan. Therefore, in the politics of regional reformation, the Makian bureaucrats paid back to the Sultan of Tidore the debt they owed for the great policy followed by his ancestors.

In the present context, the two Sultans of Bacan and Tidore formed a coalition to compete with the Sultan of Ternate to determine the location of the new Province's capital. Ternate assumed that the capital of the Province would remain in Ternate since it was the principle city in the Regency of the North Moluccas. However, the Tidore-Bacan coalition, supported by Makian government officials, argued that the provincial capital should be moved to Soa Sio on the island of Tidore where the Sultan of Tidore still had authority. The central government knew about the conflict of interests over the location of the new capital so they postponed the decision. Perhaps the delay was part of Habibie's plan to use the regional development of the Moluccas as part of his strategy to increase the chance of Golkar winning in the general election of 1999.

It the end, the central government came to a decision based on a feasibility study using the 1964 survey when the first plan for separating the North Moluccas from Ambon had been made. The result of the study was that the capital of the Province should fit with the growth in population anticipated by the central government and would be located in Jailolo. The government proposed Sofifi in Sindangoli, Jailolo as the new capital. This region was historically in the territory of the Moti Sultanate, which had moved from the island of Moti to Jailolo, Halmahera.

When I arrived in Ternate in the middle of August 1999, there had been demonstrations organised by several social groups that were divided between two positions. The first group were those, siding with the Sultan of Ternate, who wanted the capital to remain in Ternate. The second group demanded that the capital be in Soa Sio on Tidore Island. Most of the political elites and people of the North Moluccas did not support the government's proposal of Sofifi, Jailolo.

The group which wanted Soa Sio as the provincial capital had to negotiate with the Sultans of Tidore and Bacan and as well as professional groups from the Makian bureaucracy. The principle topic of political negotiations related to the position of the Governor of the North Moluccas. The Makian bureaucrats wanted the position of Governor. At that time, the second highest position in the North Moluccas was the regional secretary who was a Makian. Their position was that if the Sultan of Tidore received the right to locate the provincial capital in Soa Sio, Tidore, then the Sultan of Bacan should be given the position of Governor of the North Moluccan Regency.

This political calculation included the proposal that the Sultan of Ternate would become the head of the regional parliament (DPRD) of the North Moluccas. However, the Sultan of Ternate also wanted the position of Governor of the North Moluccas. Tomagola says that the Sultan of Ternate used the youth organisation *Gemusb* (Youth Generation of Sultan Babullah) as his means for campaigning for

the provincial capital to be located in Ternate and to nominate him as the Governor of the North Moluccas (Tomagola: 2000a, 8). However, with the political bargaining described above, it was difficult for the Sultan of Ternate to find support, even among members of Golkar in the provincial parliament (DPRD Tingkat I). Few would support his nomination because the local elite had already decided on a leadership packet. The Sultan of Ternate at least needed the support of the PDI-P and small parties as they had already committed themselves to choose him as the Head of the parliament.[234]

After the first outbreak of violence between the Makians and the Kao in the middle of July 1999, the Sultan of Ternate visited the Kao people and the Makians in Malifut. However, the local elites suspected that his visit as Sultan was just a strategy to gather support from the people on Halmahera. Genealogically, the royal descendents from Tidore, Makian, Bacan and Ternate considered the people of Halmahera as lower class. In earlier days this region was not desired because it had no cloves (Andaya: 1993a, 186). However, politically, Halmahera was under the power of the Sultan of Ternate who used the island and the people as a major source of food, pearls, boats, metal and soldiers. The Halmaheran people were loyal to the Sultan of Ternate, but not totally because they also had attacked him. Their conversion from their local religion (*alfuru*) to become Christians was also an expression of their liberation from the hegemony of the Sultan of Ternate (see Chapter IV).

The people in Halmahera had developed and progressed. The most important district in Northern Halmahera is Tobelo. It has a modern society with a majority of Christians. Muslims are a minority but they control the small scale economy in the Tobelo town market, which is also the most densely populated area. The elite class, which controls the ownership of stores and manages the copra collectors, are Chinese Indonesian Christians. Many indigenous people of Tobelo work as civil servants, teachers, or church workers. In Tobelo there is a Theological College (STT GMIH), the GMIH church headquarters and a GMIH hospital.[235]

The slogan *Maluku-Kie-Raha* became the symbol for the autonomy movement in the North Moluccas after the New Order collapsed. *Maluku-Kie-Raha* was even proposed as the name of the new Province of the North Moluccas. A Makian-Tidore coalition of the power elite as well as the Sultan of Ternate, initiated the proposal. In earlier times, the Sultan of Ternate used the expression *Maluku-Kie-Raha* to create unity among the North Moluccan kingdoms in the fight against the Portuguese traders. However this proposal was rejected by the people of Halmahera who did not see themselves represented by the expression *Maluku-Kie-Raha*. In the current situation, the people from North Halmahera, including those from Kao, Tobelo and Galela, are a new class which is succeeding in their economic life. The central government in Jakarta also rejected the slogan

[234] See the narrative of this bargaining at the beginning of the chapter.

[235] The history of religious development in Halmahera can be found in Chapter IV. See also Chapter III for a description of the connection of social structures and religious divisions in Ngidiho.

Maluku-Kie-Raha because of its connotations of feudalist ideology and the danger of seperatism.

The elite in the North Moluccas viewed the Sultan's visit to the refugees from the two burned villages of Kao, as a campaign for Christian support of his political ambitions. Even Christian officials from the local government were suspicious of the use of traditional *(adat*) power by the Sultan of Ternate to manipulate public opinion for his own benefit. They doubted the ability of the Sultan to lead the North Moluccas through the use of *adat* power, especially since there were many other candidates for Governor whose potential and ability had already been tested in politics and management. The debate over candidates for Governor and the location of the provincial capital did not help solve the territorial dispute between the districts of Kao and Malifut. Rather, it aggravated the situation.

5.5.4. The Land Dispute as the Beginning of Conflict

In June 1999, the government of the North Moluccas issued regulation PP No.42/1999, which established the District of Malifut Makian Daratan, made up of five villages from the Kao District and five villages from the Jailolo District. The people of Kao and Jailolo both rejected the government decree on the grounds that the people from each of the groups could not be separated from their own ethnic community. The Kao villages wanted to be joined together with other Kao villages and the Jailolo villages assumed the same.

The rejection of the regulation by the Kao was especially strong. The social leaders of the five villages, as well as all the village Heads and social leaders from the District of Kao signed a letter rejecting the decree.[236] The letter was sent to the government of the North Moluccas in Ternate and to the leader of the GMIH Church in Tobelo. The community of the Kao was 90% Christian living in 27 villages and 10% Muslim who lived along with Christians in the District capital of Kao.

The government argued that the five villages were not located close to the other Kao people. Therefore they were logical candidates for a new Makian District. However, the Kao people believed the real motivation behind the decree was related to the gold mine operation which was a join investment between Australia and Indonesia. The gold mine was located in the area of Gosowong, in the village Wangeotak of the Kao district. This was one of the villages being transferred to the Makians. When the government issued the decree that placed five Kao villages in a new, Makian District, the tension between the Kao and the Makians exploded.

The Kao community was already committed to rejecting the regulation. This rejection created tension between the two ethnic communities each of which portrayed the other as their enemy. As neighbours, the Kao felt that the Makians discriminated against them and looked down upon the Kao. Most of the Kao

[236] See the letter which was written on August 27,1999.

people are farmers or hunter gatherers. In 1982, a fight broke out between the Makians and the Kao. This had happened because Makians had taken over land from Kao people from Pagu. The Makians are a relatively educated community, which received subsidies from the local government for many years. The Kao people were already jealous of the Makians success in politics and business, and did not want to submit to the implementation of regulation no. 42/1999. However, pressure from the Makians became so strong that it evoked physical conflict with the Kao. On 22 July 1999, the first riot occurred. It began when Makians attacked two Kao villages, Wangeotak and Sosol, that were decreed to become part of Malifut Makian Daratan. The villagers' houses and the church were burned. As a result, Kao people began to congregate from all over Northern Halmahera in order to retaliate.

After intermitant fighting that was only restrained by the military, the violence reached serious levels again on 24-25 October 1999. The government of the North Moluccas decided to evacuate the outnumbered Makians from Halmahera in order to avoid an even greater conflict between the two groups. The Mayor of the Ternate Municipality did not have any legal authority to evacuate the Makians from Malifut. However he claimed it was an act of humanitarian mercy.[237]

However, it appears that the Mayor and officials of the regional government who were allied to the Makians, agreed to evacuate them to Ternate as a political strategy in opposition to the Sultan of Ternate. The Sultan of Ternate was trying to negotiate an agreement between the Kao people and the Makians regarding the government decree that transferred the five villages to Malifut. The Makian-Tidore alliance viewed the policy of the Sultan of Ternate as a tactic that would sacrifice their interests in order to gain sympathy from the Christians so that they would support his candidacy to become the new Governor of the Province of North Moluccas.

The Sultan of Ternate opposed the evacuation of the Makians to Ternate on the grounds that there was no room for them in addition to the various refugees that were already fleeing from Ambon. The decision to aid the evacuation exacerbated the regional government's conflict with the Sultan of Ternate and became a means to attract religious sympathy for the Makians who claimed they were oppressed by the Christians from Kao.[238] At that time, the Sultan of Ternate suggested that the Makians of Malifut should be moved back to their original villages on the island of Makian.[239] The Makians and Tidorese considered this

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[237] See the statement of the Mayor of Ternate in an interview with a reporter from the Ternate Pos: "It's true that Malifut is not in my jurisdiction, but for the sake of humanity I must help them. The local government of Ternate only sent vehicles. We did not send people to Malifut". The vehicles were used to evacuate the Makians. See Ternate Pos, (November 2-8, 1999).

[238] cf. (Alhadar: 2000). A Kompas reader named H. Taraweh Dajamaluddin SH, Head of the Advocacy Team to discover the Facts about the North Moluccan Riots, responded to this article. In his letter to the Editor he doubted the involvement of the Sultan of Tidore as implied by Smith Alhadar. In Dajamaluddin's opinion, the riots in the North Moluccas were purely religious riots. He rejected Alhadar's analysis that argued that there was a political-economic element. See his letter in Kompas, (January 20, 2000).

[239] See (Tomagola: 2000a).

suggestion favoritism and a further ploy to gain sympathy with a certain group, especially since the Sultan of Ternate showed concern for the Christian refugees in Bitung and Manado and urged them to return to Ternate.[240]

Before the last riot, on November 3, 1999, there was an announcement on the radio inviting the all Makian Kayoa to return to Malifut Makian Daratan to rebuild their mosque. This was inflamatory, since during the riots, the Kao (including 10% Muslims) were careful not to damage the mosque of the Makians. The riot on November 3, 1999 occurred when the Christians were worshipping at the Sunday service in their church in the village of Jati. The Muslims of Kao were in charge of security for the district capital, so when the riots began they were guarding the church. The Christians ran out of the church and fought along side of the Muslims from Kao, against the Makians. In addition to their greater numbers, the Kao were traditionally warriors while the Makians were more accustomed to trade and politics. As a result, the Makians had very little success in fighting against the Kao and many Makians were killed. The result of this riot was the removal of the Makians from the Malifut district where they had already lived for more than 25 years.

The evacuation of the Makians from Halmahera to Ternate created new tensions in the city. The Sultan of Ternate, with his palace guards, the yellow troops, began to take control of strategic sites to protect the city of Ternate from further riots as a consequence of the arrival of the Malifut Makians. On November 6, 1999 riots began in Tidore where there was a slaughter of Christians. This violence was provoked by the counterfeit letter that was purportedly signed by the Head of the Moluccan Protestant Church (*Gereja Protestan Maluku=GPM*) in Ambon. The letter was addressed to the Head of the GMIH Church in Tobelo, Northern Halmahera. The letter was provocative because it claimed there was a plan for Christians to take over the whole of the Moluccan islands. Because of this letter, the GPM church on the island of Tidore was destroyed and the Christians were expelled.

The tension increased because of the violence in Ambon and its neighbouring islands. Many Muslim Tidorese fled from Ambon and returned to Tidore. The returning refugees brought their pain and grief with them. At the beginning of 1999 there was a movement in Tidore to evacuate the Christians. However, the local government stopped the plan after several Christian civil servants, who had lived in Tidore for more than 15 years, requested permission from the government to live in Soa Sio, Tidore.[241] The riots in Tidore were emotionally linked to the riots that occurred in Ambon. However political competition among the elite in the North Moluccas continually fed the tensions.

[240] See (Tomagola: 2000a, 9).
[241] Refugees from Tidore were interviewed in Bitung, August 2000.


Pictures 47-48: Two members of the Sultan of Ternate's yellow troops guard the area around the market; in this picture, several Village Heads from Galela have just arrived in Ternate. I was with them entering Ternate several days after the killing of Christians spread from Tidore to Ternate during November 3-11, 1999.

On November 7, 1999 riots broke out in Ternate. Ternate was now divided into North Ternate where the Sultan was in control and South Ternate where the Makians and Tidorese were running things. The Moluccan Protestant Church (*GPM*) was in the center of Ternate and in the South. The killing which drove out the Christians began in the South and moved North to the border between the two groups. The yellow troops controlled northern Ternate, including the Chinese neighbourhood where the centre of business was located. The violence was provoked through leaflets and loudspeakers from the local mosques. A few days before this happened, attackers had already stoned the houses of Christians. Christians began to leave Ternate before the slaughter occurred in Tidore because they felt the increase of terror in the region where they lived. Christians who defended themselves were killed, especially those in the area around the GPM church. The rioters were not local people, but rather persons unknown to their neighbours. The attackers came from different villages and cities.

After this conflict, the violence escalated and spread to the whole of the North Moluccas. The Sultan of Ternate had to leave Ternate after the fighting between his Yellow Troops and their enemies on December 27-28, 1999. This battle was related to the riots which had erupted in Northern Halmahera during what was called the Bloody Christmas of 1999. The Yellow Troops fought against the Makian and Tidorese forces from Ternate who wanted to cross over to attack Tobelo in Halmahera. The Yellow Adat Troops prevented reinforcements from reaching the Muslims in Tobelo, but in the end the joint forces of the Makians and Tidorese defeated the Yellow Troops of the Ternate Sultan.

5.6. Conclusion

Through this analysis of Indonesian political history, we can conclude that ritual politics are commonly used from the village level right up to the national stage. Power relies on symbols, words, myths and violence. A political project carried

by either negotiation or coercion can be reinforced by the articulation of symbols. When negotiation is blocked, violence becomes a means of determining political directions.

The Youth Vow Movement (*Sumpah Pemuda*) eloquently called for unity based on ethnic politics. This unity was transformed and channelled according to religious and non-religious ideological categories. Learning from the history of Indonesia, Sukarno united people by employing populist rituals. Pancasila and local traditions were trademarks of Sukarno's leadership. In the period of Suharto, unity was enforced by tight controls, the suppression of dissent, economic growth and technological solutions to social problem. During this period of Reformation, the unity of the nation is under severe attack. The nation lacks any coherent political format or ideology. National rituals are in disarray and political interests are fragmented by region, religion and ethnicity.

During the post colonial period in the Moluccas, the central goverenment in Jakarta has tried to control the political identity of the Moluccan people. The Moluccas are a part of Indonesian political history that illustrates how competition for power is articulated in symbols and rituals that help form coalitions for the benefit of each political actor. Coalitions ensures the continuation of relationships of mutuality where each party both gives and receives. For example, Golkar employed the Sultan of Ternate to become an elite cadre. The last election before Suharto stepped down, shows that the local people still supported Golkar. The success of Golkar opened the opportunity for the Sultan of Ternate to return to regional power, as he appeared to revitalize the historical memories of the region. Political rituals enlivened both national and regional politics.

However the collapse of Suharto, which ushered in the Reformation era also reinvented the bitter political rivals from Ternate and Tidore who used the Kao and the Makians to stake out their differing claims to the ancient kingdom of *Maluku-Kie-Raha*. The separation of the North Moluccas from the province of the Moluccas sharpens the old competition among the four kingdoms in the area. The political transformations among the regional elites drove the people to divide into different groups that distinguished themselves from each other through their history of loyalities, religions and sub-ethnicities. When the interests became great and the conflicts could no longer be managed wisely, the common people of Northern Halmahera had to pay the price in their own blood.

Chapter VI
The Making of Ritual Conflict

> "Rhetoric, rituals, and images provided a symbolic framework for revolutionary political culture. Although the political content of speeches, festivals, and representations of authority, such as seals and coins, changed over the decade, many of the principles and aspirations that shaped them remained fundamentally the same" (Hunt: 1984, 123).

This chapter begins with a description of the riots in Tobelo on December 26, 1999 and its impact on the extended violence in Galela that followed. We then examine local factors that contributed to the violence. How did different actors structure the conflict through ritual in order to mobilize the masses in Ngidiho? We will try to disentangle all the rumours and perception of both Muslims and Christians in the conflict. Our analysis attempts a "reconstruction" of the games people played and the strategies pursued by those "behind the screens" to achieve their goals. The key question is, why did the conflict result in ritualised violence and to what do these rituals refer?

6.1. The Dance of Invulnerability and the Water of Anointment

After violent religious riots took place in Malifut/Kao, and then in Tidore and Ternate, riots also began in several other places in Central and Northern Halmahera.[242] In this section I will discuss the dynamics of the beginning of these riots. The account will also pay attention to elements of religious ritual that were mixed with the power of local magic in the riots. The riots were ritualised and employed ritual leaders in a liturgy of local worship that predates the coming of Islam and Christianity to the region.

6.1.1. The Fitri Dance

Three young girls, about 8-9 years old, draped in transparent white robes that reveal every part of their bodies, are dancing. It is said that the three young girls were chosen because they are virgins and have not yet had a menstruation. These two elements are very important prerequisites for raising up the supernatural

[242] On November 7, 1999 there were killings of Christian children and teenagers in the village of Lola, District of Payahe, Central Halmahera. As already noted, in an account of the chronology of the riots in North Moluccas such as is taken from Forum Keadilan (January 23, 2000), there are discrepancies between the version of events according to the Christian community and the Muslim community. The riots noted above are not recorded in the Muslim version. I have used the data from the Christian version in this account because it is well attested by the research data I gathered from the refugees whom I interviewed in August, 2000, in Bitung and Manado. I received confirmation from responses of both Christians and Muslims about this data when I went to North Moluccas in February 2002 (see also Chapter VII).

power, which will make it possible for them to dance a truly magical dance. In the local tradition, young girls sometimes also have the power of revelation that is shared with other members of the society.

The movements of the dance are very simple. Their arms are raised with hands outstretched and open to the direction in front of them above their heads. Their hands sway to right and left as the enemy shoots arrows in their direction. Their hands grasp and throw away the arrows that they have caught. In this first movement their little hands easily catch the arrows that are shot towards them. With a single change in the movement of their hands, the arrows they succeed in catching are thrown away to the right and left. Very gracefully they dance, so that the many arrows that fly at them from all directions are plucked from the air.

This dance of invulnerability is accompanied by the sound of a drum (*tifa)* that is played by an adult male dressed in white with a white headband. The beating of the *tifa* gives energy to the three young dancers, who dance with the purpose of tearing down the physical strength and concentration for warfare of the male soldiers across the way who are shooting the arrows. At the same time, other armed men with white headbands fill in the line behind the dancers. They are only standing on guard. They do not act at all because the three dancers and the musician are now in the midst of an effort to tear down the defences of the enemy before them. While moving in imitation of the *Cakalele* dance, they cry out in unison *Allahu Akbar.* Over and over again, the line of men behind the three, young, girl dancers, shout their praises to God with all their might.

This scene is not a dramatic act from an artistic production, but a part of a ritual that emerged at the beginning of violence in December 27, 1999 in the village of Togolio, District of Tobelo. Another term for this dance is the *Fitri* dance. *Fitri* is from the Arabic word that means holy or pure. In a condition of purity a person who dances this dance can receive bodily invulnerability that can overcome sharp objects that are sent by the enemy in an attack. They choose to wear the colour white to differentiate their identity from the identity of the enemy, based on their understanding of the nature of purity. Due to their choice of this colour they are called the white troops *(pasukan putih).* Only the Muslim warriors performed the *Fitri* dance, which became their trademark during the civil war in Tobelo and Galela.[243]

The little girls actually serve as conductors of power, because the power that flows towards them is sent from an adult male who acts as the leader of the ritual in shaping the war that is taking place. The leader of the war ritual, who in everyday life is their *Imam* (leader of worship), has supernatural power, gained through carrying out a ritual of fasting in which he is forbidden to eat, drink or have sexual relations. Some of his followers, who were all men, support him by joining in the ritual of fasting. The achievement of invulnerability takes time. Fasting must be carried out several days before the dance. In the conflict ritual

[243] This reconstruction of the *Fitri* dance was obtained from various sources whom I interviewed in August, 2000 in Manado, North Sulawesi. Muslim informants in Galela also confirmed the story when I returned to the area in February 2001.

that took place in Soa Sio, Galela on December 27, 1999 there was only one man who played the role of warlord in dancing the *fitri* dance.

The young girls in transparent clothes dance to confuse the enemy and take away their power. When faced with the dancers, the enemy will feel sexually aroused. This will break down their resistance and concentration on war by stimulating their sexual lust for the strongly magical girls who dance before them. When the concentration of the enemy is destroyed, then the warriors who are behind the dancers will attack and easily defeat their enemies. The bodies of the warriors were wrapped with paper on which was written verses from the Holy Koran to increase their protection. Rain made the girls appear even more naked but tended to reduce the effectiveness of the sacred dance because the verses from the Holy Koran written in Arabic became wet and disintegrated.

6.1.2. The Ritual of Sprinkling Holy Water

The Christians also carried out rituals to support their war effort. For example, before going to battle the troops would gather in a church to be sprinkled with holy water. The Christian troops were sprinkled in the Protestant church (GMIH) in Kusuri,[244] before marching to battle against the people who used the young girls for the *Fitri* dance in Togolio. The minister commissioned the congregation for war. The role of the Tobelo ministers in the ordering and revelation of war strategy was limited to prayer and anointing the red warriors with sprinkled water after the worship service in church. The task of directing the battle was carried out by the leader of the war, who is called the *Kapitan* (Captain) of Tobelo. Prayer and sprinkling was a characteristic ritual at all Christian villages during the civil war in Tobelo and Galela. They closed the ritual with a blessing in which the minister stretched out his arms as a sign of the Lord's commissioning to His congregation. Then he came down from the pulpit and took water, which had already been blessed, from a font in the front. This water was then sprinkled over the congregation before they left the church.[245]

From the necks of several men, a small bible was hung like a necklace. This was believed to act as an amulet that inculcated invulnerability, so that they received the strength to withstand sharp objects that could kill their bodies. When facing the *Fitri* dancers, they sang lively Christian hymns and swung a piglet held by several men in the direction of the dancers. On the edges of their swords they also smeared pig fat and carried the flesh of pigs while repeating the name of Jesus Christ as an antidote against the *holy* Fitri dance. With a strange irony, they also repeated the Hebrew word *shalom* meaning, "peace", as a mantra to build their

[244] Kusuri and Togolio are located to the South of Tobelo and are close to each other. Kusuri is an indigenous village, which is sometimes referred to as inhabited by *suku terasing* (alienated or strange tribe), but actually are the original indigenous people of the area. Their religion is a mixture of Christianity and local religious practices. Togolio is a new village created in the 1980s. It is a transmigrant village with inhabitants from Galela, Tobelo and Java. Most of its people were Muslims.

[245] Note that this took place in Protestant, Calvinist churches that have no official Church tradition of holy water expect the water for baptism.

spirits. Unfortunately *shalom* was opposite to their reality as people engaged in war.

The Christian warriors wore red headbands. The colour red is symbolic in the original culture of Tobelo-Galela. Traditionally the colour red signifies courage and virility. The people who wear this colour hope to receive the power of invulnerability from the spirits of their deceased ancestors. The Christian warriors throughout the Moluccas were called the red troops *(pasukan merah)* during the conflict. The ritual practices of the Christians, like the Muslims, mixed their religion with traditional beliefs. The Christian minister or priest cleansed the people and dedicated them to war. The minister purified his people from the evil influences of supernatural power that belonged to bad ancestral spirits while praying that God will strengthen them. However the Christians in Tobelo were more open to ancestral rituals than the Christians in Galela.

The church in Galela dedicated the fighters to God and cleansed them from evil by burning and destroying their magic amulets and bottles containing spells or charms. If there was someone among them who still kept a magic amulet, the minister who found out about it would immediately carry out a ritual of cleansing by burning the offending items. This rite was necessary in order to guard the unity of the red warriors in Galela and protect them from God's displeasure. The Galelans believed that violation of this requirement would result in the defeat of those who went to battle. At the same time, those who stayed in the village, including the women, had to hold a worship service as long as the battle continued. Prayers and praises were raised to God, pleading for help on behalf of those who are on the battlefield. The rituals in the village are what determined the success or survival of the Christian warriors in their battle against the white troops. The minister would not accompany the warriors, but would pray privately. If he received revelation about the direction of the attack, he would send a messenger to communicate his vision to the congregation that is on the battlefield.

Nevertheless, the red warriors of Galela and Tobelo do not agree that the minister is a leader of the war. They believe that the leader of the war is the Lord God whom they defend. In Galela especially, the Red Warriors reject trust in the spirits of their ancestors. This rejection is based on the history of Galela, because Galela (in this case the village of Duma), was the first place that the Gospel was preached in North Moluccas, therefore they belief they should keep to purer Christian beliefs. Another reason that was not stated explicitly is that the ministers of the GMIH congregation in Duma and the surrounding area are not indigenous to Galela. Thus they do not have the knowledge of, or sympathy with the local beliefs.

Tobelo society is more ethnically oriented than Galela in their approach to war. Christians in Tobelo followed many of the ancestral rituals in their conduct of the war. The appointment of a *kapitan* is based on the magic abilities that he possesses. The *Kapitan* of Tobelo is said to have magic power, which he received from the spirit of his ancestors. The magic power of the *Kapitan* of war in Tobelo

is supported by his wife's abilities who has a special relationship with the spirits of the ancestors in her house in the village of Kupa-Kupa in the area of South Tobelo. This wife will not leave her room as long as her husband is leading the battle. Her room smells of *kemenyaan* (incense). This woman wears black clothes and fasts, as long as the battle is waged.

The people who live in the villages, who are not directly involved in the fighting, provide other kinds of support for the war. They must be obedient to various kinds of restrictions. If these taboos are violated, it is believed that the people who participate in the battle can be destroyed. The essential taboos include washing clothes or hanging them in front of the house; they are forbidden to leave the house, take a bath, have sexual relations or eat chillies, etc. Certain names of objects and persons "out there" may not be spoken aloud or even referred to. These taboos are observed as long as a battle is taking place or may cover several days of a campaign.

At the same time, the red warriors who participate in the battle are forbidden to do immoral actions such as stealing, raping women, or killing old people and children. Violation of these laws of war would cause the loss of the power from the amulets, which were given by the spirits of the ancestors. The Christians of Tobelo believe that the peoples' and the warriors' obedience to the taboos that were established by the *Kapitan* of War in Tobelo is the reason for their success in battle. The *Kapitan* of war will reputably kill any warrior that violates a taboo. It is said that on the second day of the riots, the Tobelo *Kapitan* of War meted out punishment to both red warriors and civilians who looted the stores of Chinese business people.

The difference in war rituals between the red warriors of Tobelo and Galela was influenced by the GMIH Church's ambiguous relation to the violence. At the beginning, the GMIH Synod leaders located in Tobelo rejected the church's direct involvement in the religious riots. However when the war was taking place the Church supported the Christian warriors. As more and more refugees escaped to Tobelo, the leadership of the Synod of GMIH had to help the many church members who were wounded and suffering from the war.[246] At the same time, some GMIH leaders left the area during the conflict and lost credibility with the people in their congregations. The war leaders sometimes silenced those who stayed and tried to restrain the violence. During the violence, churches were used for war councils, but they were led by adat war leaders, not pastors. In some cases, pastors were able to prevent the execution of Muslims but had little influence over the general fighting.[247]

The rituals performed by both sides signify a different approach to the technology of war. Both sides were happy to use modern military technology, if they could get it. But modern weapons never replaced magical power. Beginning in February 2000, the military became more involved and the white warriors gained

[246] From my interview with a leader of the Synod of GMIH church in Manado, in August 2000.
[247] From an interview with Rev. Marthen Budiman, a pastor who stayed in Halmahera during the violence and was later elected Head of the Synod.

access to modern weapons.[248] However, the white troops still relied on magical power for protection. Sometimes there were terrible slaughters when one side attacked without caution because they believed they were invulnerable. The red warriors, like the white warriors, continued to practice ritual conflict right to the end. They combined mystical rituals to harness the power of their ancestors, with religious teaching that was supplemented with home made weapons that the people fashioned themselves.[249]

Why did the people use ritual for war? Mary Douglas says that ritual creates a process for formulating experience. The act of killing and being killed is so powerful and so traumatic that people need to sacralize their actions. Acts, or experiences, of unspeakable violence can be redeemed from the horror of meaninglessness if they are formulated as part of a sacrifice for God. Ritual brings strengths to the people who admit that the unthinkable has happened and modify its meaning so that it becomes part of an experience that can be expressed as meaningful (Douglas: 1988 [1966] , 64).

6.2. Analysis of Terror and Violence

One way to explain the conflict in the Moluccas is to show how fears and tensions accumulated until they boiled over into violence. Terror analysis must pay attention to how local people built their understanding of what was happening during the build up of tension. The media for spreading information in the North Moluccas included not only formal tools of communication such as newspapers, radio, and TV, but also banners, flyers, gossip, rumours, stories and graffiti. The informal media used in the everyday life of the people was a powerful factor to stimulate people to participate in violence. Detailed descriptions show how the media influenced the people. Diverse kinds of information media carried ideological agendas. The media developed a political discourse that discredited rival groups and mobilised believers to prepare for violent conflict. This discourse of fear operated on many levels.

The following report is based on my ethnographic notes and maps the increase of fears among the people during my four months in Ngidiho prior to the outbreak of war. Tensions were increasing every day at the village level, stimulated by apocalyptic rumours, interpersonal conflicts, and purportedly academic analysis that sowed fears and suspicions among the people in the area. When fears reach a certain level, there is a tendency to "fight or flight". Those who stay to fight, may ritualise their actions to justify doing what they might never even dream of doing under normal circumstances.

6.2.1. Rumous of the Number Nine

The first rumour concerned the number nine (9). The people were frightened by a rumour that the apocalypse or day of judgment would occur on the ninth day of the ninth month in the year of ninety-nine. This rumour frightened the whole of

[248] See Kompas (May 31, 2000).
[249] See Jawa Pos (April 30, 2000).

the North Moluccas and Central Halmahera. Several local newspapers in the North Moluccas reported concerning the society's response in facing the frightening rumours about the 9-9-99 prophecies. In Ternate many schools were closed on 9 September 1999. The school holiday was intended to anticipate the fear of the pupils regarding the date 9-9-99. The market places were also empty because most people had done their shopping prior to the fated day. The people were hoarding rice, kerosene, and dried food to provide for the eventuality of riots. Business people who sold swords benefited from the rumours of riots, because as long as the rumours circulated, they sold large numbers of swords and machetes.

Local newspapers attempted to moderate the fears regarding the number nine. They said that it would pass without anything happening. But the people believed in it anyway. The local newspapers reported that the fear of the Day of Judgment terrified the people in the village of Guruapin, District of Kayoa. Two days before the 9th the citizens there, according to the story they told to the newspaper, saw two ships sailing to the West of their village. It was said that at 1 AM they observed the sailors from the two ships lowering bombs over the side of the ships. Later the young men who were on vigilant watch that night approached the place where this occurred, but failed to find anything. Therefore they later assumed that the vision, which they saw earlier, was actually caused by sea ghosts.[250]

People believed in the rumours of the Day of Judgment *(Kiamat)*, regardless of their religion. The word *Kiamat* comes from the Arabic word *qiyaamah*, which means resurrection.[251] Both Islamic and Christian theology affirms that on the Day of Judgment, God will raise the people who have passed away. However many people of both religions accept the common understanding of *Kiamat* as the destruction of all of nature and the end of the world. This diverges from the original meaning of the term. According to the *Ternate Pos* newspaper, the people's belief in these rumours was a sign that the people didn't believe any more in their local leaders, who often gave explanations that were unclear.[252]

In Ngidiho where I lived, *mama* Iana, the wife of *Oom* Din, who usually sold bananas in the market, refused to leave home on the fated day. She said that fear was rife among the people for a whole week before the dreaded date. The trucks that usually carried workers past *Oom* Din's house were empty. Many workers at the banana plantation, who lived in the district of Galela, did not enter work. When I shared this story with some friends of mine, one of them who stays in Jakarta said that on that date his institution was also empty because people were afraid that it was the Day of Judgment.[253]

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[250] Part of the original traditions of North Moluccas includes beliefs in Sea Spirits, who are classified as evil demons. However equally strong is the tradition of piracy and smuggling.
[251] See the conversation of a reporter from Tempo with Dr. Kautsar Azhari Noor (Noor: 1999, 54).
[252] See Ternate Pos (September 7-13, 1999).
[253] Thanks to Jajat Burhanuddin who shared this story with me. 9/9/99 passed without major incident.

6.2.2. Rumours of the Outbreak of Riots in Tobelo

A couple of months later we heard rumours of riots in Tobelo when we were preparing for the wedding party of the son of Permenas Budiman, who was marrying a girl from Manado, North Sulawesi. She worked as a labourer at the banana plantation. On November 6, 1999, both Muslim and Christian family members were gathered at the home of Permenas Budiman.[254] On the day before the wedding party, many members of the family, both Muslim and Christian, gathered at the family home in order to help prepare food for the party. That afternoon, everyone was shocked by news from a passing bus carrying passengers to the banana plantation. Someone from the bus shouted, "Tobelo has broken out! Tobelo has broken out!" Everyone ran to the main road. The men ran out to the main road carrying swords. At the same time, several of the women started to cry. The people who were at the house preparing for the wedding ran home because they remembered their children and houses that they had left. Not long after that, several old people that were walking from the West of the village came by calling out: "People, please be calm! We are all brothers and sisters! Don't do anything! Keep calm!" The Ngidiho Village Head, wearing his official government uniform, gave orders to the village officials to calm the people.[255]


Pictures 49-50: Muslim and Christian Men cut the meat of a cow for the wedding party at the time when rumours were spreading in Ngidiho; The groom stands behind his Muslim aunt while the Christian and Muslim women cut vegetables for the party.

But the people had already started to panic, especially after more and more people who worked in the banana plantation returned home. Buses from the direction of the banana plantation went by Ngidiho full of people who where already carrying their mattresses and other possessions that could be saved. In the midst of this panic, a loudspeaker blasted out announcements, reassuring the people that

[254] Permenas Budiman is a Christian. His father was a Muslim who married a Christian woman and later became a Christian. In 1974, his older brother, Suaeb Budiman, married a Muslim woman and became a Muslim.

[255] The head village of Ngidiho told me that he only wore his official government uniform if the situation became dangerous, or for a formal occasion where he was expected to appear as the representative of the official government of the Republic of Indonesia at the village level.

nothing had happened in Tobelo. Two highly respected elders were the voices behind these announcements. The first speaker was a leader among the Muslim people (*Oom* Syarif) and the second was a Christian leader (*Oom* Nani). These elders reassured the people again, saying, "People, we are all brothers and sisters. Don't be fooled by various rumours. Nothing is wrong. Tobelo is calm. Nothing has happened."

After these announcements, officials of the government of the District of Galela came by wearing official government uniforms and riding motorcycles. They asked the people to remain calm. Then I saw a government car, bearing important leaders from both the Muslims and the Christians, speed past in the direction of the Banana Plantation. The concentration of workers from various areas and religions at the Banana Plantation was considered very dangerous, especially since workers could be seen starting to move their possessions from various housing locations. The weeping of people in the buses going by Ngidiho was very loud and disturbing. The buses were full of mattresses, tables and other possessions that the workers were moving as they fled from the Banana Company to their home villages.

People from villages that included Muslims and Christians left together and together guarded the safety of their people. However the view was different with homogenous villages of only one religion, Muslim or Christian. In Soa Sio, where most of the population is Muslim, the men, armed with swords, spears, bow and arrows and hatchets, continuously guarded their borders against the Christian villages of Mamuya and Pune. One of my respondents in Soa Sio felt shocked because Muslim men, armed with identical swords, suddenly prowled wildly up and down the streets. They believed that people from Kao would soon attack Galela. Actually the word Kao was only a name to them because what they meant was the Christians. They were on guard for several days, but nothing happened.

Picture 52: This is a picture of a Bugis trader who had rented a small space in front of *Oom* Din's house for his little store. Here he waits for a bus to transport his belongings and himself back to South Sulawesi because of his fear of riots. This was just a few days after the rumours of trouble reached Ngidiho.

In the evening, I heard from the Village Head of Galela, what had actually happened in Tobelo. In the afternoon, on that day, in the fish market of Tobelo, there was a fight between two relatives who were selling fish. This fight caused a chase in the market area in which the man chasing the other yelled that he would burn the market. This fight scared the people shopping in the Inpres market of Tobelo. People fled the market shouting, "It's already happened in the market!" Some even shouted that the market was already burning. At that time it was not yet true, but it was a self-fulfilling prophecy. The lie created the conditions in which it became true.

6.2.3. A Disturbance on the Following Saturday

A week later, on Saturday, November 14, 1999, another disturbance shook Tobelo. The people of Ngidiho ignored this rumour of riots and its influence did not spread dramatically in Galela. However, once again the people in Tobelo were very tense because of the trouble. A young man from the District of Kao, who worked as a teacher at a junior high school, was drunk in the marketplace. The guards in the marketplace, under the organization *Gema Hilo*, had already been increased because of the rumours of riots the week before. *Gema Hilo* was a paramilitary organization of Muslim and Christian youth who were employed to keep the peace. They ejected the drunken man because they considered him dangerous to the safety of Tobelo. The youth then hired a motorcycle taxi (*ojek*), to take him out of town, towards the South. Not far from the market, in front of the Bulog[256] office building, he threw a section of pipe that was a bomb, but it didn't explode. Some people reported seeing smoke coming out of the pipe. A group of young men from *Gema Hilo*, accompanied by police from Danramil in a patrol car, chased the *ojek* in order to arrest the youth.

In the village of *Efi-Efi*, in the District of South Tobelo, the young man stopped in front of the house of one of his relatives from Kao. While still half drunk, he said that his action at the market was just to scare those who were responsible for the disturbance the week before. When the police and guards from *Gema Hilo* were about to arrest him, he suddenly picked up a big, black rock about the size of a mango, and ate it. The people who observed this were shocked and said he ate the rock as if it were peppermint candy. The police were also frightened by his apparent magical powers and allowed him to continue his journey and return to his home village in Kao. This story (rumour) was widely repeated and generally believed by people from all ethnic groups and religions. However among the Muslims, Kao people began to be identified as people with power and magic that had to be faced with an opposing spirituality.

6.2.4. The Counterfeit Letter as a "Scientific" Rumour

Several days before the Ngidiho village meeting on November 14, 1999, a counterfeit letter, allegedly from the Head of the Moluccan Church, circulated in Ngidiho. This document had influenced the outbreak of riots in Tidore and

[256] *Bulog* is the national government organization in charge of national distribution of food and other resources.

Ternate. Leaders called a village meeting in order to discuss the preparation of Ngidiho to face the increasing number of rumours about impending riots. The counterfeit letter[257] circulated secretly among the Muslims of Ngidiho. A son-in-law of the ex-village head, who originated from Tidore, brought the letter. The people made photocopies and the counterfeit letter began to spread. Just as in Tidore and Ternate, in the Districts of Galela and Tobelo the government did not ban or denounce the letter. However, the Village Head of Ngidiho told me that he had already discussed the letter with the minister of the GMIH church in Ngidiho and had asked the Muslim community to surrender to him all copies of this dangerous letter.

The contents of this letter were extremely provocative and intended to stimulate conflict between Muslims and Christians. The ostensible sender of the letter was listed as the Head of the Synod of the Moluccas, Semi Titaley, on behalf of the Council of Elders S.G.T.-C.S.I.S. The name of Semi Titaley was used as a symbol of Christian power. As Head of the Synod of the Moluccan Church (GPM), he was portrayed as a person capable of mobilizing the whole society of Christians in the Moluccas. The letter seemed to legitimise the spread of "religious war" from the Central Moluccas (Ambon and its surrounding islands) to the Northern part of the Moluccas. On the basis of this documentary "proof" that the Christians were preparing to attack, the Muslim gathered in fear and quickly attacked the Christians in Tidore, Ternate and Pajahe in early November 1999.

The riots in the North Moluccas on November 3, 1999 began in Tidore. Ternate was guarded by the *adat* (traditional) warriors of the Sultan of Ternate, referred to as the Yellow Warriors.[258] In Ternate, according to reports in the newspapers, the rumours about the counterfeit letter spread very quickly.[259] The counterfeit letter showed a deep understanding about the political situation in the North Moluccas. It refers to the conflict between officials of North Moluccas and Central Halmahera about the location of the capital city of the new province. The writer understood the political challenges of the moment that could be exploited by the church to gain power throughout the Province of the North Moluccas.

According to the writer of the letter, the church in Halmahera must establish itself because of several realities that are outlined in the letter. First, it presents a general view of the geography of the North Moluccas and Central Halmahera that is squeezed between the Central Moluccas (Ambon), North Sulawesi (Manado), and Irian Jaya. These are all areas that are majority Christian. This perception is

[257] In Indonesian this is referred to as a *surat kaleng* (letter in a can), or anonymous letter. However in this letter the author is stated, but apparently stated falsely. Therefore it can be referred to as a counterfeit letter.

[258] The colour yellow is a royal color that according to the research of experts is connected with the religion of Hinduism. After the Hindu kings converted to Islam, they still maintained the color yellow. The color yellow is the color of turmeric (*kunyit)*. See (Brierley: 1994). See also the explanation about the use of special items in the Islamic Kingdom of Malacca, in the 16th Century, with attention to the division of colors determined by the status of those who wore them. The color yellow was the color of princes. See (Andaya and Andaya: 1982, 47).

[259] See, Ternate Pos (November 16-22, 1999).

accompanied by a prediction that North Sulawesi is ready to release Sangir Talaud to the North Moluccas because of its ties of history, tradition and culture. The release of Sangir Talaud would strengthen the position of Christianity in Halmahera.

Secondly, in order to establish the church, the Makian ethnic group must be evicted because they are considered fanatical Muslims occupying the land of Halmahera (Malifut). This action to establish the church should be carried out through an ethnic war linked to land claims. By taking an approach to war over land claims, according to the picture drawn in the letter, the ethnic Makians will lose their support from the Muslim community in the North Moluccas and Central Halmahera. This loss of support would break the unity of Islam in the North Moluccas, which is isolated because ethnic identity is the priority in the region. However, although ethnic strength is viewed as the authentic face of Halmahera, the letter argues that Christianity transcends ethnicity and is the driving force that carries out its agenda through church programs in the Moluccas, North Sulawesi and Irian Jaya. According to the local newspaper, the counterfeit letter's reference to "marginalizing the Makian ethnic group in Halmahera," effectively stimulated feelings of revenge among the Makians who had just been evicted from their houses on October 24, 1999. Furthermore, the local paper wrote: "The issue was designed in such a way that it appears that the attack against the District of Malifut was carefully planned and the church was the secret player in the background."[260]

Thirdly, it appears from the letter that the church planned a strategy for the bloody counter-attack against the village of Sosol based on the two considerations stated above.[261] According to the counterfeit letter, this strategy was the product of a decision by Christians from the North Moluccas in Ambon, who attended a meeting with the Synod of the Moluccas and its Council of Elders S.G.T.-C.S.I.S. These decisions concerned the characteristics of war, the organization of power in the Christian community and among the Muslims of Kao, the establishment of taboos as long as warfare continues, and the funding of war.

The discourse concerning motives for the Christian aggression, as described in the counterfeit letter, carried the same load of issues that appear in the accusations of Tamrin A. Tomagola, a prominent sociologist from the University of Indonesia in Jakarta, who originated from Galela. After the riots in Tobelo and Galela broke out Kompas describes Tomagola's opinion as follows: "According to Tomagola, especially regarding the riots in North Halmahera, he sees three primary causes, namely the struggle between religions for supremacy over the area, whose roots go back more than 127 years into the past…", secondly, the struggle for control of a gold mine, and thirdly, the struggle for the Governor's seat.[262]

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[260] See, Ternate Pos (November 16-22, 1999).

[261] The villages of Sosol and Wangeotak were two villages that were attacked by the Makians at the earlier conflict in June 1999 (see Chapter I and V).

[262] See Kompas (January 6, 2000). See also, (Tomagola: 2000a, 7). Tomagola's opinion that links the struggle for natural resources with the struggle for religious supremacy is questionable. Why? Because when Dutch, Protestant missionaries entered the area approximately 127 years ago

The Synod of GPM (the Protestant Church in the Moluccas) in Ambon denied the authenticity of the letter and the Synod of GMIH in Tobelo also repudiated it. The denials and clarifications had already been sent on November 2, 1999 to the Governor of the Moluccas, the Commander in Chief of the Military Command Area XVI Pattimura and the Police Chief of the Moluccas. Several points substantiated the formal denial of authenticity from the Synod of GPM in Ambon:

1.The number of the letter, 028/S.G.T.-C.S.I.S./VII/99, as stated in the letter, is not a letter code that was ever used by the Protestant Church in the Moluccas.
2.The organization code S.G.T.-C.S.I.S., used in the address of the letter, is unknown as a church organization in Indonesia and the Moluccas.
3. The term *Sinode Maluku* (The Synod of the Moluccas) in the title Council of Elders S.G.T.-C.S.I.S. is also unknown and different from the official name, *Sinode GPM* (the Protestant Church in the Moluccas).
4.The writing of the name, Semi Titaley, as the sender of the letter was not written in the proper way that was used in all official documents and letters of the Protestant Church in the Moluccas. Official letters from the Head of the Synode state his name and title as: "*Ketua Sinode Gereja Protestan Maluku*, Pdt. S. D. Titaley, S.Th.," not "Semi Titaley."
5.The GPM stated that the contents of the anonymous letter were far from the understanding and knowledge of the GPM.

A letter of clarification from the Elders of the Synod of GMIH also explained that the statement in the counterfeit letter about "organizing intellectuals from the Theological University of Ternate," also showed that the writer of the letter did not understand that there is in fact no such thing as a Theological University, or indeed any school of Theology in Ternate. In 1989, the *Akademi Teologia GMIH* (The Theological academy of GMIH) moved from Ternate to Tobelo. This move simultaneously changed the status of the school from a theological academy to a seminary (*Sekolah Tinggi Teologi GMIH*). The address for this institution is, *Sekolah Tinggi Teologi GMIH* in Tobelo and not *Universitas Teologi, Ternate* (The University of Theology, Ternate).

There was no response from the government of North Moluccas to the denials from these two Christian organizations, nor any attempt to correct the falsehoods in the counterfeit letter.[263] However subsequently the government of North Moluccas accused the Sultan of Ternate of being the origin of the counterfeit letter. Tomagola also accused the Sultan of Ternate of being a provocateur in the national press.[264] Masdjid Abdullah, a professor at the University of Sam

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at the end of the 19th Century, they did so after the Sultan of Ternate and the government of the Netherlands were unable to overpower the people of North Halmahera (Tobelo, Galela and Loloda), who worked the sea lanes as pirates. They primarily attacked the boats of the Sultanate as a sign that embodied their protest against the monopoly of the Sultanate over local economic resources such as pearls and sea cucumbers (see Chapter IV).

[263] See Ternate Pos (November 9-15, 1999).

[264] The newspaper Surya reported that there were mutual accusations between the Sultan of Ternate and Drs. Tamrin Amal Tomagola, M.A., Ph.D., about each other's involvement as provocateurs. See, "Saling Tuding Soal Provakator" (Surya, January 22, 2000). However, on the same day in the newspaper Kompas, Tomagola who had stated four names as provocateurs in the

Ratulangi in Manado, suggests that Tomagola was unwittingly manipulated by a faction of the local political elite to support their cause. Tomagola's analysis further polarized the negative atmosphere that already existed.[265]

The massacre of Christians in Tidore, Ternate and Pajahe received very little attention in the national press and was not recorded as part of the chronology of the North Moluccan riots in the version of events published by the Council of Imams (*Majelis Ulama Indonesia=MUI*) of the North Moluccas. Nor is it mentioned in the accounts of several other Muslim groups.[266] Why did the MUI ignore the facts about the massacre of Christians in November 1999, as recorded in the version of the Working Elders (*Majelis Pekerja*), of the Synod of GMIH? The simple answer is that each side downplayed events that discredited them. Christians also did not tell about their massacre of Muslims, as reported in the national media.[267] The MUI account is interesting because of their distortion of facts in the chronology. The MUI reported that in Ternate on December 27, 1999 the Sultan of Ternate, along with the Christians, attacked the Muslims who wanted to go to Tobelo to help the Muslims there. Actually, at the end of December there were not any Christians in Ternate or Tidore because they were all killed or had fled the month before, in November 1999. By associating the Sultan of Ternate with the Christians, this account added to the discrediting of the Sultan in the eyes of the Muslim community. The elimination of important events in the riots shows how each side used selectively chosen parts of the conflict to build momentum in support of their own interests at the regional and national level.

6.2.5. The Christians of Galela Help the People of Kao

In August 1999, after the tension between Kao and Malifut had already started, several Muslim villagers from Ngidiho remarked to me that they sympathized with the resentments of the Kao against the Makians. They said that if they were from Kao they would probably do the same. Not only farmers but government officials in Galela also showed sympathy for the Kao people. A Muslim District official told me that he had helped his counterpart from Kao communicate with the provincial government in Ternate after the fighting broke out. The Kao villages that were assigned to Makian-Malifut included Wangeotak, Sosol, Balisosang, Tabobo and Gayok that are located near a profitable gold mining operation in Gosowong. The sympathy of the people of Ngidiho for Kao stemmed from their experience of also having lost their farmland. They were forced to sell their land to PT GAI at a very low price, and thus felt cheated. The villagers

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Moluccan riots, namely, besides the Sultan of Ternate, were Dicky Wattimena (Ex-mayor of the city of Ambon), Bucek Sarpara and Yorrys Raweyai (Head of the Presidium of Pemuda Pancasila), then apologized to the last two people he had accused. Tomagola's apology to Sarpara and Raweyai was based on restudying the data that he had received. But Tomagola still defended his accusations against the first two names, i.e. the Sultan of Ternate and Dicky Wattimena. See Kompas (January 22, 2000). In a personal conversation with me in July 2000, in Yogyakarta, Tomagola appeared to regret his accusations against the Sultan of Ternate as a provocateur.

[265] See Ternate Pos (November 16-22, 1999).

[266] See Forum Keadilan, (January 23, 2000).

[267] See Forum Keadilan, (January 23, 2000, 76-77) and Sabili (March 8, 2000, 34-35)

around Galela began to work as labourers at the company on the land they had formerly owned. The middle and upper management positions in the company were taken by outside labourers who were more educated than the local people.

There were many land cases in Halmahera during the period of reformation, especially after February 1999, when violence broke out in Ambon. Villagers demanded the return of their land or better compensation. Some Galelan students left Ambon and returned to Galela to organise demonstrations. Students returned home because it was not safe to attend school in Ambon. Their return naturally brought stories about the violent conflict in Ambon. These students organized a movement for the farmers to demand compensation from the banana plantation in Galela. As tensions continued to rise in the area, several students who had returned home from Makassar began examining the identity cards of all newcomers to the area in order to determine their ethnic and religious identity. Consciousness of ethnicity and religion became more intense.

During the new negotiations between farmers and the banana agro business company, the banana company agreed to pay a substantial settlement. Apparently the money was given to the Head of the Farmers Reformation Group, who didn't distribute all the money to the farmers. In the farmers meeting in Ngidiho in September 1999, farmers kept raising the issues. Some of the most critical farmers were Christians. In order to deflect attention from the original issue rumours were spread that the Christians wanted to take over all the area in the North Moluccas. The local farmers became more aware that outsiders held all the higher positions in the agro business. Most of the new elite originated from Manado, Toraja, Sumatra or Java and included many Christians. During interviews with labourers at the banana company I found out that there were suspicious feelings among them. Although they still came to work, they stopped mixing with other ethnic and religious groups and gathered together during the break times according to their religions.

As the rumours grew and the Galelans heard the news that the Kao people had forced the Makians to flee from their homes on October 24-25, 1999, the people of Ngidiho began to change their view of the problem. Their sympathy for the Kao faded as their suspicions and fears grew in the District of Galela where I was living. The Muslims of Galela accused the Christians of helping the people of Kao during their war with the Makians. People from Makian and Tidore first spread this accusation when they came to Galela to visit their families. As a result, the government of the District of Galela held a meeting with all the leaders of the community, including all the village Heads, on November 14, 1999, to discuss the truth of these accusations. In this meeting they asked the Head of the Area for GMIH Galela to respond to the accusations from the people of Makian and Tidore.

The Head of GMIH Galela acknowledged that the Christians of Galela did indeed give aid to refugees from Kao, but not to the people involved in the violence. The people of Kao actually include both Christians and Muslims. Therefore, according to the church leaders, the help given was humanitarian, social aid in the form of

money, clothes and basic food items such as sugar, rice, oil, instant noodles (*supermie),* soap etc. These were intended for the refugees from the two villages in the area of Kao who had not received sufficient food from the area government for several months. Since this help was considered social aid from Christians to their neighbours who were suffering, the GMIH office for the Area of Galela, that organized the aid, did not ask for permission or even report it to the government of the District of Galela. The GMIH leader stated that the basis for the aid was the same as the aid given by the government (*Pemda Tingkat I Maluku Utara*), to the refugees from Malifut in August 1999. In that case the Makians from Malifut were victims of the counter-attack by the citizens of Kao. The Christians from Galela denied that they gave military help, such as swords, hatchets or other weapons of war, let alone that they intended to help the people of Kao fight against the government of the North Moluccas, as they were accused.

6.2.6. A Bloody Christmas in Tobelo

After the November violence in Tidore and Ternate, Christians who originated from Halmahera returned home to Tobelo, joining Muslim refugees from the violence in Ambon. Among those who returned to Tobelo were Christian officials from the government of the North Moluccas. These officials were accused by Muslim officials from the government of the North Moluccas, of organizing the attacks against the Makian people in Malifut. The influx of traumatized people who were fleeing to Ternate in October 24-25, 1999 from a scene of massacre added to the tensions in Tobelo.

Tensions grew in Tobelo as rumours circulated, such as the statement that Muslims must dominate Tobelo because of its great potential. Even though Christians far outnumbered Muslims in the District of Tobelo, a Muslim dominated Tobelo was not unrealistic, given the fact that the centre of the town of Tobelo was inhabited by around 70% Muslims and only 30% Christians. Muslims were concentrated especially around the Inpres marketplace while Christians filled the southern areas of the District. [268] According to a Christian source, the *Camat* of Tobelo publicly expressed his hope that Muslims might dominate Tobelo. He also stressed that Ternate was ready to send help and human resources for defending Tobelo against the Christians.[269] Supported by the counterfeit letter, similar but opposite rumours spread in the Muslim community, stating that Christians were planning to dominate all of Halmahera.

According to rampant rumours in 1999, it would be a bloody Christmas. This did not stop the normal Christmas activities of the Christians. It was customary for Christians from the outlying areas to come into the centre of Tobelo to attend a Christmas service at the large, "mother-church." The leadership of GMIH asked Christians from the South of Tobelo to guard the area of the central Church

[268] The District of Tobelo includes 25 villages, 17 of which are all Christian, most of which are located in the South, although there are a few in the North; there is one village of all Muslim transmigrants, and 7 mixed villages with both Muslims and Christians, located in the North, South and Centre of the city. This data is drawn from, Informasi Kecamatan: 1993.
[269] Reported by a Christian refugee from Tobelo whom I interviewed in Manado, in August 2000.

located in Tobelo so that the Christmas activities of December 24, 1999 could continue smoothly. In order to transport church members from the South to the Centre, the Synod of GMIH in Tobelo wrote a letter asking to borrow a truck from a businessman, with copies sent to the police and military headquarters.[270] The letter explained that the truck was needed to carry people from the GMIH congregations in the villages of Kupa-Kupa, Tomahalu, Efi-Efi, Upa, Pitu and Gamhoku to the centre of the town. Each congregation would appoint 10 people to guard the area around the Synod offices of GMIH, Bethesda Hospital and the area near the places of worship, during the services of December 24-25, 1999. On the evening of December 24, 1999, the truck brought Christian villagers from the South to guard the area. In the middle of the Christmas Eve service suddenly all the lights went out. However the congregation continued the worship service right to the end.[271]

The Muslim community in the city condemned the request for security help from the South. Some Muslims visited the Chinese owner of the truck and a debate took place about the safety of the city, to the effect that the security of the city should be trusted to the Muslims of Tobelo. As a result of this incident, the Forum for Solidarity in Halmahera (abbreviated as FSH), called for a meeting with Muslim community leaders. Members of FSH were public figures from both the Christian and Muslim communities in Tobelo. This meeting reached the conclusion that the Muslims of the city wanted security for the churches on December 25, to be handled by churches from the city (Gosoma, Gura and Gamsungi), rather than from villages to the South. The Christians accepted this suggestion.

On December 25, 1999, at 9:30 PM, a mattress was burned in an empty house owned by a Makian Muslim, located next door to a retirement home owned by the Gosoma congregation of GMIH. This raised the tension again between the Christian and Muslim communities around this complex. Suddenly a man wearing a white headband appeared and accused the Christian community of burning the house. Nevertheless, the riots did not break out. The next day, December 26, 1999, the Gosoma congregation held a baptism. The tradition of Christians there on the occasion of a baptism is to sing from house to house. This custom, which has been carried out for many years, was continued in the midst of a very tense situation prompted by the rumours of a bloody Christmas. The Muslims felt that this was another example of Christians provoking a riot. But still the riots did not break out.

That night the tensions reached a fever pitch. The Raya Mosque repeatedly broadcast the sound of shouts of *Allahu Akbar!* (God is Great), while the GMIH churches all over Tobelo, rang their bells. People beat on the metal electric poles and once again the electricity went out. Everyone began running. People were

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[270] See the letter, No. wil.1.1/1113/A-4/XXIV/99, dated in Tobelo on December 20, 1999, from Distric Working Elders (*Majelis Pekerja Wilayah*) GMIH Tobelo addressed to *Pak* Jansen, regarding help with a vehicle. Jansen is a Chinese who was born in Morotai and has lived in Tobelo more than 20 years. Copies of the letter were sent to Kapolsek and Danramil Tobelo.

[271] See Suara Peduli Halmahera (1999).

running every which way in a panic. According to the Christian account, simultaneously around 8 PM, rocks were thrown at the houses of Christians in several parts of the city, including the complex of Karianga field, the complex of the retirement home of GMIH Gosoma, the complex of the police dormitories of Tobelo, the offices of the Synod GMIH Tobelo and the homes of Chinese. However a Chinese eyewitness reported that many of the Christian young people were drunk and began looting stores. A Muslim crowd set fire to two homes of Christians near to the retirement complex in the village of Gosoma. The Christian side only began to fight back around 1 AM, however by 5 AM, after repeated attacks by the Muslim masses the Christians could no longer hold out. Houses in the shopping area of the city began to be burned. By the morning of December 27, 1999 Tobelo was in the control of the Muslims.

On the morning of December 27, 1999, reinforcements of Christians from the South of the District of Tobelo began to arrive. They were delayed by a "line of steel" set up by the military between Tobelo and the nearest village of Wosia. However the Tobelo masses from the South entered by another route through the forests from the West and entered the city around 12 o'clock noon. With reinforcements from the South of the city, the Christian masses were able to return to battle. The Muslims defended with vigour, but the Christian masses began to burn Muslim houses in the city of Tobelo.

At about 7 AM on the morning of December 28, 1999, the Muslim masses began to be beaten back, so they rallied at the Raya Mosque in Tobelo. The Tobelo Christians succeeded in beating back the Muslims because the Muslim reinforcements that had been promised from Ternate never arrived. In Ternate there was a battle between the adat warriors, or yellow troops of the Sultan of Ternate and the Makian-Tidore warriors led by the Sultan of Tidore. The forces of the Sultan of Tidore finally won this battle and the Sultan of Ternate was forced to flee from Ternate.[272] It was reported that the Sultan of Ternate stopped the Makian troops, which planned to depart to Tobelo to provide reinforcements to the Muslims there.[273]

At the boundary between Tobelo and Kao there was a Muslim village named Togolio. In this village, a competition in magical warfare took place. The Muslim people used the *Fitri* dance, the mystical war dance led by almost naked girls described at the beginning of this chapter. The Christians also used ancient magic rituals to oppose their enemies. The Christian troops included people from Southern Tobelo and Kao. The battle at Togolio lasted for a full day and resulted in many casualties on both sides.[274]

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[272] See Kompas (January 10, 2000).

[273] Support for this interpretation can be seen in the chronology, "Versi Umat Islam (MUI Maluku Utara, FPI Maluku Utara dan Pos Keadilan Peduli Umat)," that records that on December 27, 1999 there was a battle between "Pasukan Dewan Adat Ternate" (the Council of Ternate Traditional Warriors) together with Christians, against the Muslims who intended to help the Muslims who were hard pressed in Tobelo, Forum Keadilan, (January 23, 2000).

[274] We don't know the facts about the number of casualties of the war in Togolio. A radical Muslim magazine reports that the Christian troops killed many people (see Sabili: March 8, 2000, 34). When I revisited Tobelo and Galela in February 2002, I was told by Christians and Muslims

In the Christian-Muslim village of Gamhoku, a large number of Muslims died after they took refuge in a church. According to an eyewitness account, they were first promised asylum by the Batak pastor, if they stayed in the church. However, during the night someone suspected of coming from the church killed a Christian from a neighbouring village in the jungles. Enraged Christians from the neighbouring village came and killed all the Muslims who were sheltered in the church. The Batak pastor tried to prevent the massacre but almost lost his life in the process. A conflicting story claims that the Muslims planned to set fire to the church but were discovered and killed before they could carry it out. Both of these accounts agree that the killing was done by people from another village. The Christians and Muslims from Gamhoku were family members and neighbours who enjoyed good relations. The Batak pastor was devastated emotionally by these events and returned to Sumatra.[275]

In the end, the Christians drove the Muslims from the town and District of Tobelo. Some of the Muslim masses in Northern Tobelo fled to Soa Sio a Muslim port on the coast of Galela. From there they caught a boat to Ternate. But the majority of Muslims from the centre of the town of Tobelo, numbering about 13,000 people, fled to the military dormitories of Rifle Company C, Battalion 732, where they were protected and eventually exited Tobelo by way of the navy ship, KRI Teluk Laksa.[276]

6.2.7. The Christians of Ngidiho Leave Their Village

After the warfare broke out in Tobelo on December 26, 1999, on the next day war broke out in Galela. There were 20,062 Muslim inhabitants of Galela and 11,131 Christians. As a district with a large Muslim majority, fighting was first conducted from the three villages in the North of Galela, namely Soa Sio, Simau and Toweka. According to the Christians, attacks were carried out by the Muslim masses from the East and West, encircling the interior of the District of Galela. On the other hand Muslims believed the Christians attacked first. The people from Duma acknowledged the perception of Ngidiho Muslims that the Christians from Duma started the attacks on December 27, 1999.[277] According to the Christians from Duma, they had to attack or they would be dead, foolishly killed by the Muslim masses that were coming from the West and the East.

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that the majority of the transmigrants from Java had already left the village of Togolio before the fighting occurred.

[275] I heard the first account in August 2000 from refugees in Bitung, North Sulawesi, including conversations with the Batak pastor. Christians in Tobelo related the second story in February 2002. This was one of the worst incidents of the war. It was exploited by radical Muslims who published a one sided account, complete with gruesome pictures of the bodies, that was distributed to mosques all over Java and used as part of a call for a *jihad* against Christians in the Moluccas. Interreligious killing seldom took place between Muslim and Christian members of the same village in Galela and Tobelo.

[276] See Kompas (January 1, 2000), and Kompas (January 10, 2000).

[277] Interview with a victim of the war from Duma, with whom I met in the General Hospital of Malalayang in Manado, in August 2000. *Oom* Din also agreed that the Ngidiho Muslim attacked the Christians because the people of Duma had already attacked the village of Gotalamo. This confirmation I received in February 2002.

In the West, the Christian majority villages, including Seki, Pune, Soakonora and Togawa, were already empty. These were mixed villages in which Christians and Muslims lived together. The mixed villages were evacuated after they heard that the fighting had already started in Tobelo. They left in order to prevent needless killing that might take place between Christians and the Muslims who were the majority in Galela. The people in mixed villages were related to each other with family ties, even though they followed different religions. They journeyed for six days through the jungles of Loloda, without carrying anything, to the village of Wangongira. Wangongira is located on the border between the Districts of Tobelo and Loloda.[278] The white forces from the three Muslim villages, while passing through these villages, burned the houses that had been left empty. The stream of white forces flowed together with other Muslim masses from the village of Togawa to Igobula and then together attacked the village of Soatobaru. However the Christians in Soatobaru were well prepared and beat the White forces back to Igobula.

At the same time, the interior attack from the East began in Ngidiho, as a village with mixed Muslim and Christian inhabitants, but a Muslim majority. But before the Muslim masses arrived from the East, the Head of the village of Ngidiho, at 5 AM, visited a prominent figure among the Christians, Permenas Budiman, advising him with tears that all the Christians should leave Ngidiho. Budiman, like many others, has family ties with Muslims in Ngidiho. The village Head explained that fighting had already broken out in Tobelo and very soon there would be an attack on Ngidiho by Muslims from the East. The warning came, in part, because one of Budiman's older brothers, Suaeb Budiman was a Muslim who was planning to go on the Haj to Mecca, together with the village Head, in February 2000. Besides that, Suaeb Budiman's mother is a Christian who still lived in Ngidiho. Some of the Ngidiho Christians fled by a path through the jungle in the direction of Duma, which is a Christian centre in Galela. Others continued their journey to Wangongira.

After the Christians fled Ngidiho, the White forces arrived from the East and burned all the homes that were left by the Christians of Ngidiho. The flow of the White forces from Ngidiho was stopped at Makete, a village of people from Sangir Talaud. In Makete, the Christian forces from Duma had already arrived after defeating the Muslims in the village of Gotalamo, which lies between Duma and Makete. Thus the Christian forces in Makete included a coalition of Christians from the villages of Makete, Duma, Dokulamo and Soatobaru. These "Red forces" launched a counter attack against the White armies from Toweka, Simau, Soa Sio, Gotalamo and Ngidiho, driving them back to the coastal area in the North of Galela. In this counter attack the Christian forces burned the homes of the Muslims in Ngidiho. In this counter attack, 8 Muslims from Ngidiho were

[278] This data was obtained through interviews with Christian refugees from the village of Togawa who were part of the six day exodus through the jungle. The interview took place in August 2000 in Tomohon, North Sulawesi.

killed.[279] One of those killed was the head of a household whose mother was a Christian from Duma. He refused to leave Ngidiho because he was sure that the Christians would protect him, since he had family ties with Duma. However the Christian forces did not believe him and he was killed.[280] After hearing this tragic story, his mother, who had fled to Duma, experienced very profound grief.[281]

The leadership of the GMIH church for the District of Galela wrote a letter to the leadership of GMIH in Tobelo, requesting that Christians from Galela who were refugees in Tobelo, be sent back to their villages so that they could help in the war. However the Galelans refused the request on the grounds that their houses had all been burned to the ground. There was nothing to which to return. Some of the refugees from Galela were only in transit in Tobelo and subsequently chose to become refugees in North Sulawesi (Manado). Therefore the number of Christians involved in the war in Galela only included people from the homogeneous Christian villages of Makete, Duma and Soatobaru, with the addition of a few of the Christian inhabitants from the mixed villages of Ngidiho, Dokulamo and Bale.

With limited numbers, after overcoming Ngidiho and Gotalamo in the East, the Christian forces attacked Igobula in the West and managed to drive the Muslims back to the coast, so that they were only concentrated in three villages on the North coast of Galela, namely Simau, Toweka and Soa Sio. In this pressured situation, the Muslims of Ternate took over the ship Lambelu to come to Galela and pick up the Muslim refugees who were concentrated in Simau, Toweka and Soa Sio.[282] *Oom* Din, as one of the leaders in the mosque (*Badan Sara*) of Ngidiho, quickly arranged for the safety of the children and women of Ngidiho by bringing them to Soa Sio.[283] The refugees from the interior where driven to the beach using trucks taken from the banana plantation. *Oom* Din told me the story of his experience during the Christian attack on Ngidiho. He recounted how he stood defending his home. He said that the arrows that were shot at him could not enter his body because of his magic. However magic could not save the village. Finally the Muslims of Ngidiho had to leave their own village, just as had already happened to the Ngidiho Christians.

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[279] Earlier reports were much higher. During the fighting, many people were often missing and presumed dead for days, weeks or even months, before finally turning up alive. This illustrates the common tendency among people caught up in the trauma of the violence to overestimate the number of casualties. On the other hand, official reports from the government are usually far too small because they only count casualties whose bodies are taken to the hospital. See the next footnote.

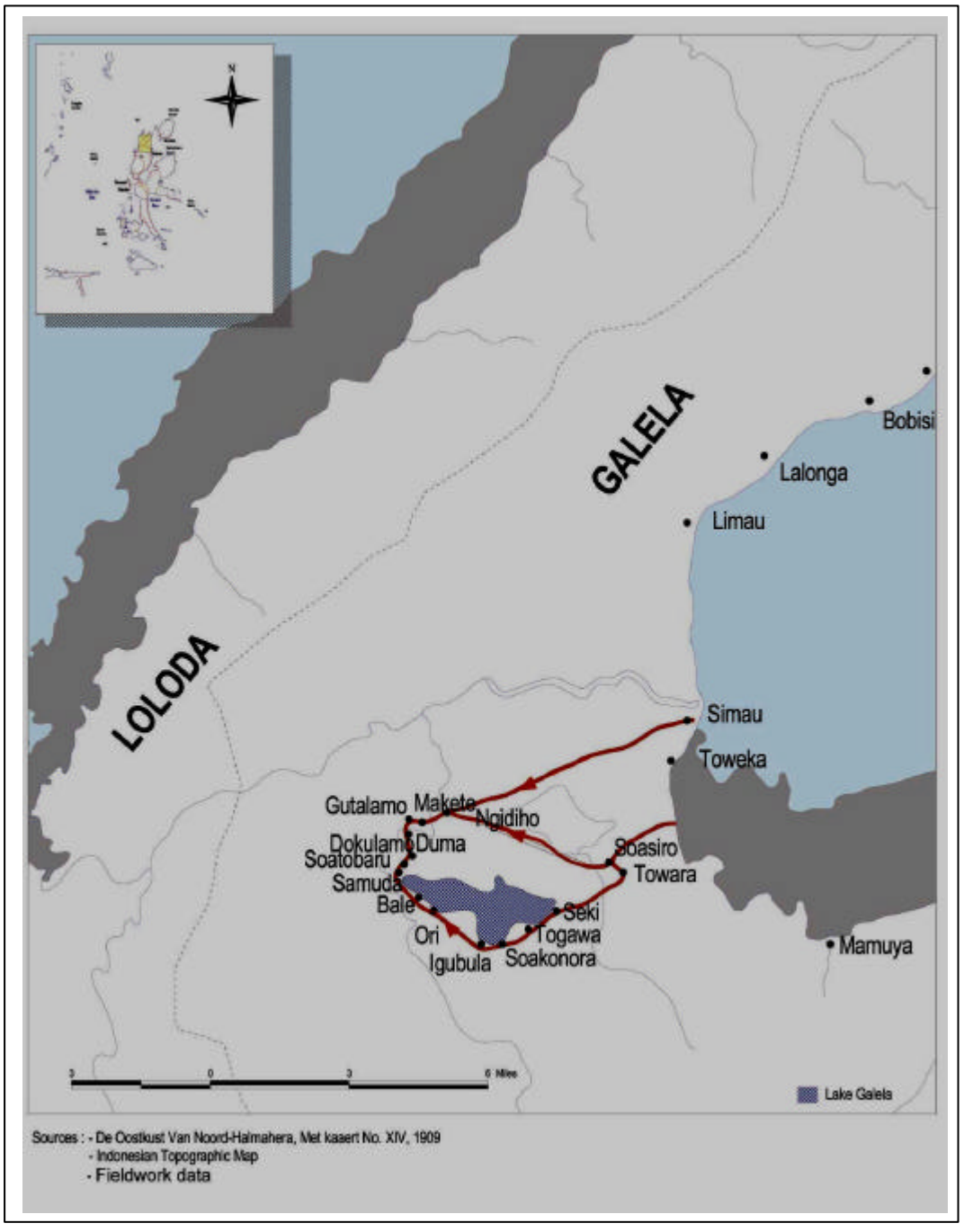
[280] In the early days of the war, I heard from Muslims in Ngidiho that he had been killed along with his wife and children. However this turned out to be a mistake, since his wife and children are still alive. This illustrates how rumors often magnified what was already a terrible disaster.

[281] This story was related in an interview with people from Duma who subsequently became refugees in Bitung, North Sulawesi. The interview took place in August 2000.

[282] See Kompas (January 4, 2000).

[283] Interviewed with *Oom* Din was conducted through telephone, in January 2000.

Map 9: The mobilization of Violence in Galela



The following chronology summarizes the increase of tensions in Ngidiho and its neighbouring villages during the period leading up to the violence:

Chart 5: Chronology of the Violence in Northern Halmahera According to Fieldwork Data

July, 1999:	Publication of the Government Decree on the Extension of The Malifut's territory (PP No 42/1999)
18 July 1999:	The announcement of the rejection among the people of Kao of the government decree
18 – 21 August 1999:	The riots began with an attack by the people Malifut against the Kao villages of Sosol and Wangeotak. The masses of the Kao respond by attacking the population of Malifut
9 – 9 – 99:	The number nine rumors of the end of the world
12 October 1999:	The formal establisment of the Province of North Moluccas
24-25 October 1999:	Another attack by the Makians against the Kao, followed by a Kao attacks on the Makians. Makians evacuated by the mayor of Ternate to Ternate
3-4 November 1999:	Christian killed or driven out of the island of Tidore
5-11 November 1999:	Similar killings take place in the city of Ternate
6 November 1999:	Rumors of the Outbreak of Riots in Tobelo
13 November 1999:	Disturbance on the Following Saturday
14 November 1999:	A Counterfeit Letter was spread in Galela
14 November 1999:	Meeting of the leaders of the villages in Galela followed by a meeting of community leaders in Ngidiho
November 1999:	The Christians of Galela Help the People of Kao
26 December 1999:	Religious Riots break out in Tobelo
27 December 1999:	Religious Riots broke out in Galela The Christian in Ngidiho left their village
28 December 1999:	The Muslims in Ngidiho left their village
22 May 2000:	The Fall of Duma and the Muslim of Galela conquer the whole area of their district

6.2.8. Counter-Attack by the White Warriors

The religious warfare in Halmahera quickly became national news. For days on end, the news about Halmahera was the centre of attention on both government and private television stations throughout Indonesia. Galela and Tobelo suddenly became household words spoken daily by people in Java, whereas previously they were unknown. The newspapers wrote about the slaughter in Halmahera. Several versions of the chronology of events came out. But the stories that emerged in Indonesian newspapers, on television and in magazines primarily focused on the results of the fighting, such as how many Muslims were killed. Most did not pay attention to the chronology of events or of how the process of conflict developed into violence. Some accounts gave the impression that the Christians just rose up and slaughtered the Muslims. Conversely, accounts by international Christian groups portrayed the conflict as though it were simply a matter of Muslim persecution of Christians. Fundamentalist Christian accounts gave the impression that only Christians died.

The story of the slaughter of Muslims by Christians in Halmahera became a kind of political discourse in Indonesia that was simple, uniform and whole. These stories were enlarged after a team from *Kostrad* (Special Forces), arrived in Halmahera on January 1, 2000. Kostrad documented the killings through television films that gave the impression that the only victims in the war were Muslims that were killed by Christians.[284] Extreme cruelty could be seen in the pictures of people killed with their bodies burned, as they lay dead in a mosque. They gave the impression that the Muslims were killed while trying to shelter in a mosque. However several Muslim eyewitnesses related that when a white soldier died, his body would be taken into a mosque by those who were still alive, because it was considered a sign of dying as a martyr.[285] Christians from Tobelo told me the same story when I revisited them in February 2002. Films or photos of corpses lying in churches or mosques do not show where they were actually killed or even which side they were on.

Each group told stories of the war according to their own interests. This could be seen in the way the Muslims of Ngidiho related the chronology of how the war started and progressed. According to some Muslims in Ngidiho, the Christians of Ngidiho left the village because they already knew there would be an attack on Ngidiho from Duma. They left in the early morning without the knowledge of the village Head. This version differs from the story of the Christians who say they were advised to leave by the Village Head, who kept the promise made in an earlier meeting of village leaders, and also because of pressure from the older brother of a Christian who planned to go on the Haj to Mecca with him. As already explained, the warning was based on the assumption that there would be

[284] The report in Kompas said that Batalyon 512 Kodam V Brawijaya (*Kostrad*) started to arrive in Halmahera shortly after the fighting took place. About 500 Special Forces troops were sent. See Kompas (January 1, 2000).

[285] This account is from an interview with a Chinese businessman, who repeated what he had heard from his Javanese helper who was an eyewitness to the events in Tobelo. The interview took place in August 2000, in Tomohon, North Sulawesi.

an attack on Ngidiho from the Muslims because their strength was greater than the strength of the Christians in Ngidiho. Press bias sometimes led to strange anomalies. For example, I read a newspaper account about "Christians attacking the Muslim village of Duma" at a time when Duma was the last remaining Christian village in Galela.

A new counter attack came from the White forces after they received help from the Jihad forces from Ternate. From Jakarta, ICMI sent a Health Aid Team, namely, the Medical Emergency Rescue Committee (MER-C). This team acknowledged that as a result of the domination of the Red forces in Galela, they sought support from the Governor of the Moluccas and from leaders in Jakarta.[286]

The magazine *Forum Keadilan* reported that there were about 400 Muslim fighters in Galela, in comparison with about 2,000 Christian warriors. This was based on the assumption that the Red forces received help from Christians from other districts, including Christian refugees from Ternate and Tidore.[287] However this report is not consistent with the data found in my research. The refugees from Ternate and Tidore were mostly civil servants or business people who did not have any prospects for work in Galela. Nor did they want to be involved in more fighting. Most of them chose to move to North Sulawesi (Manado). Furthermore, the geographical location of Galela and Tobelo does not facilitate rapid deployment of personnel from one district to another. Prior to December 26, 1999 there was no unusual influx of Christians into Galela, so it is unlikely that they received reinforcements so quickly.

Therefore the media reports concerning the numbers of those fighting were not consistent with the reality that Galela is a majority Muslim District. Rather, these reports were designed to draw national support for the plight of the Muslims in Galela. The first support came in the form of a humanitarian project by the jihad troops. The name "humanitarian project" does not mean that the jihad troops were not involved in the war effort. The formulation to justify their involvement in fighting was stated in terms of the right to self-defence if attacked by the Christian troops.[288] However in the case of Halmahera, the religious warfare resulted from an accumulation of various situations. Government officials in the North Moluccas used the sentiments of religious solidarity to try to overcome the negative results of the conflict in Kao and Malifut.

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[286] In an interview between Dr. Joserizal Jurnalis with Sabili magazine, he stated that in order to open up the isolation of Galela, the medical team MER-C initiated communication with the Governor of the Moluccas and with the government in Jakarta. See Sabili (March 8, 2000, 26-27).

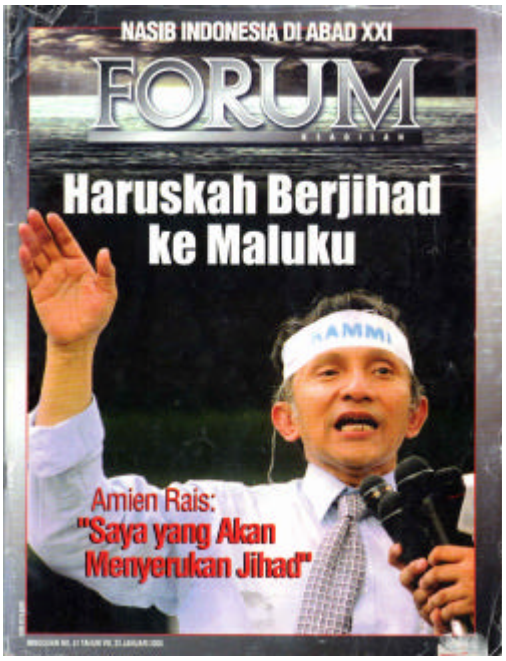
[287] See Forum Keadilan (January 23, 2000, 76).

[288] The Laskar Jihad stated that they had three activities, according to a report from the Laskar Jihad Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah Korwil DIY. See, Maluku Hari Ini (September 5, 2000). "*Pertama*, dakwah, tujuannya untuk mengangkat kembali keperayaan diri dan mental Muslimin yang ada dalam konflik. *Kedua*, misi kemanusiaan, dengan melakukan bakti sosial untuk memperbaiki atau menciptakan infrastruktur bagi penduduk Muslim dalam keadaan perang. *Ketiga*, pembelaan terhadap kaum Muslimin, ketika diserang oleh pasukan merah dan penempatan kembali kaum muslimin ke tempat asalnya yang direbut oleh perusuh Kristen."

The jihad troops at a provincial level consisted of jihad troops from several districts. According to one source, the government of the North Moluccas even took a cut from the salaries of all government officials in the Province of the North Moluccas, both Muslims and Christians, in order to build a 'Jihad Fund.'[289] In villages that joined with the Laskar Jihad, every Muslim man was required to join the jihad troops. Refusal to join the jihad troops could have an impact on the safety of other members of the man's family. The involvement of the national jihad troops in the warfare in the Moluccas is well documented and sometimes included the active support of the Indonesian military. Evidence includes the discovery of 900 men from Java, Ternate, Morotai and Galela, equipped with weapons of war, who were being transported in 17 ships from Morotai to Tobelo. *Kapolsek Daruba, Morotai*, (Inspector of Police) I. N. Saimima led this journey, on July 3, 2000.[290]

Support for the jihad was also forthcoming from national leaders such as Amien Rais who considered the conflict in Halmahera as a slaughter of Muslims by Christians.[291] Amien Rais proclaimed his support for a jihad against Christians in the Moluccas, in front of hundreds of thousands of people in the "Meeting of a Million Muslims", on January 9, 2000, the second day of the Muslim holiday, *Idul Fitri 1420 H.* Rais' stance was a criticism of President Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur) whom Rais considered late in addressing the problems in the Moluccas and especially Halmahera. But it is interesting to note that in March 1999, Amien Rais called for intervention from the United States to end the conflict in Ambon.[292]

[289] An official in the Religion Office reported this. He was a victim of the riots in Tidore, Central Halmahera.
[290] See Kompas (July 4, 2000).
[291] See Forum Keadilan (January 23, 2000, 80-81).
[292] Sumargono who questioned whether Rais' politics were Islamic or Machiavellian, condemned this kind of political maneuvering by Rais. See Sumargono (Kompas, March 12, 1999). However it should be noted that in March of 1999, Christians in Ambon were apparently winning the battle, so US intervention might have been advocated in order to protect Muslims. Later on, when Muslims, bolstered by the Laskar Jihad and military were winning, it was the Christians who wanted U.S. or UN intervention to stop the killing.



Picture 52: Amien Rais Calls for a Jihad. Source: Cover of *Forum Keadilan*. January 23, 2000.

The "Meeting of a Million Community Members" (*Pertemuan Sejuta Umat*), was held in Jakarta. This was an attempt to attract sympathy from Muslims from all over Indonesia. Since most people had limited understanding of the geographical and political realities in Halmahera, the national society of Indonesia was influenced by reports of "genocide" or the slaughter of Muslims in Halmahera. These reports dominated the national media. In addition to jihad troops being sent from Ternate, jihad troops began to arrive from Java and Sumatra. The Laskar Jihad *Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamaah*, as a national movement for jihad, instituted a selection process for volunteers who wanted to join up to fight a holy war in Halmahera or more generally in the Moluccas.[293] Even though Amien Rais said he attended the "Meeting of a Million Muslims" in order to understand the upheaval in society, his statement that he would "call for a Jihad" (*menyerukan Jihad*), was a sign that he supported the jihad in the Moluccas and Halmahera.

This was the beginning of a counter attack by the White troops with national support. The military became involved in the fighting in the North Moluccas after the war was constructed, as a war between Islam with the National Indonesia Military (*Tentara Nasional Indonesia*= TNI), against the RMS (the Republic of Southern Maluku). The military used same discourse about the conflict in Halmahera as the discourse about the conflict in Ambon, even though the conflicts were distinctly different. The military and police legitimated involvement in the struggle against the Christians by equating the Christians with the RMS. This interpretation started from the assumption that the Nation-State of

[293] See (Hasan: 2002).

Indonesia was formed out of three primary elements: the Muslims, the Military/Police and the government. These three elements must unit to prevent separatism. On the other hand, the Laskar Jihad discourse about the military/police as the defenders of the nation/state was undermined by the Laskar Jihad themselves, when they condemned the military troops which the government later sent to stop the fighting in Ambon and the North Moluccas.[294]

The North Moluccas, whose history had been completely free of the RMS movement, was then grouped as a part of the RMS Christian movement for separation from the State of Indonesia. We can clearly see how this discourse was used, in the negative view expressed by the Jihad forces in their response to a letter, sent by the leadership of the Synod GMIH in Tobelo. This letter asked the central government and the Human Rights Commission of the Moluccas and North Moluccas to bring together religious leaders from both sides in order to quickly end the fighting.[295]

6.2.9. The Fall of Duma

The village of Duma was the first Christian village in Halmahera, founded by missionaries of the *Utrechtsche Zendings Vereeniging* (UZV) at the end of the 19th Century. In light of this history, the Muslims consider Duma as the centre of missionary work in Halmahera. Actually the church has been independent of Dutch missionaries since the Japanese occupation. The great majority of Christians in Halmahera belong to the Evangelical Church in Halmahera, (*Gereja Masehi Injili di Halmahera*), known as GMIH, which is centred in Tobelo (see Haire: 1981).

After the White forces were pushed to the North coast of Galela, the Red forces made their centre of operations in Duma. The Muslim villages on the coast shared the same difficulties with supplies as the Christian villages in the interior of Galela. The normal supply of food from Tobelo was cut off for the Muslim army. At the same time, the supply of food in Tobelo, which normally came from Ternate, was cut off for the Christian army. Trade links and humanitarian aid for the Muslims of Galela had to come from Ternate. For the Christians, supplies were forwarded through Tobelo from North Sulawesi. In order to reach Duma by land from Tobelo, one had to make a detour and journey for six days through the jungles on the border of Loloda.[296] Communication was also cut off between the centre of the Islamic troops in Soa Sio and Ternate.

Later, they could travel by sea, directly from Galela to Ternate, with a stop in Daruba, South Morotai. This link was cut off, not because the Red forces dominated the sea-routes, as was suggested in several national reports about the fighting, but because Chinese business people had all fled and they owned all the ships that normally sailed from Tobelo to Ternate. Even before the riots, there were no scheduled sailings from Galela to Ternate. Indeed there were daily ships

[294] See Maluku Hari Ini, (December 5, 2000).
[295] See Maluku Hari Ini (June 14-22, 2000: 4).
[296] By the main road the trip only takes a few hours.

to Ternate, but they all sailed from Tobelo. The refugees from Galela finally sailed directly from Galela to Ternate, after they received the promised help from the government of the North Moluccas.[297]

The government of the North Moluccas installed the Indonesian army in Galela to guard the peace. Unfortunately, the troops sent, Battalion 512 Kodam V Brawijaya, who were intended to keep the peace, actually took sides in the war. There are reliable reports that during the war, the army supported a certain scenario for the war by supplying weapons and war supplies to the White forces.[298] I also heard many reports that the military sometimes stood by passively when the White troops attacked, but then fired on the Red troops when they launched a counter attack. Christian eyewitnesses, who survived the battle for Duma at the end of May 2000, reported that the Indonesian army even opened a path for the White troops to facilitate their attacks on the Red forces. Among the dead bodies, Christians discovered Muslim warriors dressed in white robes on the outside, but under the robes they were dressed in full army uniforms. Some of the women of Duma committed suicide when they watched their husbands and children shot and killed with standard military weapons from the peacekeeping forces of 512 Brawijaya.[299]

The Red troops often heard rumours of an attack before it occurred, either from sources within the military, or from members of their families who were on the White side of the conflict. These rumours were taken very seriously and required that they prepare themselves. The rumours of an attack were often accompanied by complete information about the date, time and direction of attack. Rumours became reality and many people from both sides died. On the bodies of white warriors who were victims of the war, Christian warriors discovered maps of the attack, complete with information about the day, date and time of the attack. Besides maps, they also found money in the pockets of some corpses, equalling about Rap. 200,000.[300]

The goal of the attacks by the White troops, aided by the military and strengthened by jihad troops from outside Galela, was to destroy Duma. The attacks were well planned. And the government of the North Moluccas made no attempt to find a peaceful solution. With these gathered forces, Duma was finally burned to the ground by the White forces on May 27, 2000. The Christians of Galela who were in the area during the war, considered the fall of Duma as the result of their own failure. At the beginning, they fought a kind war that relied heavily on prayer to God. Even though the number of Christians was much smaller than the number of Muslims, they believed God gave them the victory.

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[297] This information came from a telephone interview in April 2000, with refugees from Ngidiho, Galela, who were in Ternate.

[298] Several times, the navy intercepted arms shipments off the coast of Halmahera, as explained above.

[299] See Kompas (May 31, 2000).

[300] From an interview with a wounded member of the Red troops who was being treated in the General Hospital Malalayang, in Manado, on August 2000. Rp. 200,000 (about US$25), is considered a lot of money to be carried by a peasant in Indonesia. The maps and money suggest that these White troops were well prepared and perhaps paid.

However, after receiving victory after victory, they forgot themselves and forgot the basis of their victory. Instead they succumbed to a style of life that was far from the holiness demanded by a form of war based on prayer. Therefore they construed the fall of Duma as God's judgment.

In the trauma of defeat, the survivors constructed a discourse, which gave meaning to their suffering. They suggested that their own violence, cruelty and arrogance, after their great initial victories, gave the impression that their own strength was the cause of their success. In their self-reflection after the defeat at Duma, they explained that, unlike the Red forces of Tobelo who relied on a war leader (*Kapitan*), the Christians of Galela had no human leader. Their war leader was the Lord God, who had given them victory. However these Red warriors of Duma acknowledged that when they were in the heat of battle, their behaviour was like pagans who had no religion. The love and mercy that lies at the base of their faith was obliterated as they entered into total warfare and murdered their own neighbours. They believed their defeat was because God abandoned them in their sin.[301]

After the fall of Duma, on the 19th of June 2000, a ship named *Cahaya Bahari* set sail, packed with Christian refugees from Duma and elsewhere. The *Cahaya Bahari* sank together with approximately 561 passengers. This ship, overloaded with refugees sank in mysterious circumstances during a voyage in heavy seas from Tobelo to Manado. All the passengers died except two small children.[302] Among the victims who died, were 38 severely wounded survivors of the attack on Duma. Their wounds came from military grenades, bombs and rifles.[303] The cause of the tragedy is unknown but many people believe the ship was deliberately sunk.

6.3. The Connection between Material Preconditions and Violence

In this sub-section I will examine the mobilization of people leaving one area of conflict and entering into another area of conflict. How were they involved in the causes of the conflict? This sub section tries to answer this special question.

6.3.1. Returning Home and New Places to Live

The return of refugees from other areas of conflict also influenced the situation. In Soa Sio there were several Galelans who came home after the riots broke out in Ambon on January 18, 1999. One of them was a Muslim professor from Pattimura University in Ambon. In Galela he did not have any income. So he worked as a labourer, unloading ships in the harbour and became involved with

[301] These sorrowful reflections came from several people from Duma who were severely wounded and recuperating in the General Hospital Malalayang in Manado, in August 2000. Some were maimed and had lost an arm or a leg.
[302] See Kompas (July 14, 2000). I met several people who lost their husbands, wives, parents, children or sisters and brothers. One young man who is now living in Yogyakarta, lost his wife and both his parents in the tragedy.
[303] See Kompas (June 30, 2000).

the labour union there. His presence in the labour union opened the eyes of the labourers of Soa Sio, so that they became critical towards the labour policies established between the Banana Company and the Head of the labour union for Galela.

The people, who live near the port of Soa Sio and don't have income from a large plantation, often work as labourers at the harbour. Every week a banana export ship comes into port in Galela to load tons of packed bananas for transport to Japan and China. This provides a good opportunity for local labourers to earn money. However, collusion between the Banana Company and the Head of the labour union resulted in labour policies that were detrimental to the labourers. Their daily wage was even lower than that of the labourers who worked at the factory.[304] The Company was able to get away with paying such low wages because they made weekly payments to the District Government every time a ship was leaving Galela. The District Government was responsible for guaranteeing the smooth process of export and maintaining good relations with the Head of the labour union. As a result the reformation movement made very little progress among the harbour labourers in Galela.

Many Muslim students from Galela finally returned home because it was not safe to attend school in Ambon. Their return naturally brought stories about the violent conflict in Ambon. These students became involved in organizing a movement for the farmers to demand compensation from the Banana Company in Galela (see Chapter III). As tensions continued to rise in the area, several students who had returned home from Makassar began examining the identity cards of all newcomers to the area. During this period, before the religious war in the North Moluccas, the popular names *"Obed"* and *"Acang"* had already spread from Ambon to the North Moluccas as references to Christians and Muslims in Ambon. *Obed* (from the name Robert) refers to Christian warriors and *Acang* refers to Muslim warriors. These labels appeared during the religious conflict in Ambon and its neighbouring islands and are taken from a popular weekly radio program broadcast by the state radio (RRI). In this program, the Muslim guy was named *Oom Acang* and the Christian one was called *Oom Obed.* In the program, the two characters carry on a lively dialogue about routine life among the Ambonese.

Throughout the North Moluccas people were returning to their home villages. After the Makians from Malifut were expelled from Halmahera to Ternate, the Christians were expelled from that area. People from Tidore who lived in Irian Jaya also started to leave there and return to their hometowns. There were two reasons for the movement to return home. First, the exodus was connected with fears about the political tumult in Irian Jaya (West Papua) that threatened the position of immigrants in Papua. Secondly, the change in status of the Province of the North Moluccas and upgrading several districts influenced people to return home. The development of a new political structure promised to create many openings for civil servants, filling the offices of the government, from the provincial to the district levels.

[304] In 1999 the labourers were paid Rp. 10,000. per day at PT GAI.

Most Christians who were expelled from Tidore and Ternate fled to Manado, North Sulawesi. Many Christian refugees from Tidore and Ternate had a background as civil servants and business people. Therefore they were more prepared to find work in Manado than in Halmahera, especially since there were very few opportunities for work in Tobelo. At the same time, several civil servants in Galela who were ethnically Ambonese were forced by the young people of Galela to leave the district. The movement to reject civil servants who were Ambonese took place after the Makians were expelled from Malifut in the area of Kao on October 24-25, 1999. One government worker from Ambon was beaten by Muslim youths from Galela, so that he had to be admitted to the hospital. He was accused of involvement in sending war aid to Kao.

6.3.2. Prosperity of Tobelo

The diversity of the population of Tobelo is connected with Tobelo's status as a city known for the sale of copra. There were 41,392 inhabitants of Tobelo in 1992.[305] The native inhabitants of Tobelo who were farmers numbered about 32%.[306] Civil servants who came to Tobelo from various ethnic groups comprised about 2% of the population. Newcomers who came from different ethnic groups such as Ambon, Tobelo, Jailolo, Sahu, Minahasa, Loloda, and worked as teachers, ministers and imams are categorized as private officials and composed 1% of the population. Settlers of Chinese ethnicity who were Christians and worked as entrepreneurs or in the service industry numbered about 2.2%. The people with mixed professions and various religions made up about 17% of the population.

In 2000, people with mixed ethnic origins from Padang, Java, Gorontalo, Bugis, Tidore and Makian-Jailolo worked as small traders in the marketplace and comprised about 5.6% of the population.[307] Native, Muslim, Tobelo residents who worked as labourers at the harbour and fishermen numbered about 2% and were scattered through the villages of Gura, Gamsungi and Gosoma, which are integral parts of the city of Tobelo. With this kind of diversity, the people are primarily related to each other through economic ties and the ties of religion.

6.3.2.1. Natural Resources and Economic Backgrounds

The Muslims portray the city of Tobelo as "the city of the dollar" (Kasman and Oesman: 2000). Copra is traded in Tobelo, following the fluxuations of the exchange value of the rupiah against the US dollar on the international market. Tobelo is therefore one of the most important district capitals in the island of Halmahera. The sale of copra in Tobelo also results in the city serving as a

[305] This data is drawn from, Informasi Kecamatan (1993, 35).
[306] The number 32% is taken from the percentage of inhabitants, both men and women, between the ages of 15 to [60] years old. This is the age considered "productive". The following percentages are calculated based on the number of productive inhabitants of Tobelo in 1993, namely 25,593 persons.
[307] I gathered this data in an interview with an official of Pemda Maluku Utara, in Manado, August 2000.

storage place for copra from other districts such as Loloda and Wasilei. In addition, the topography of Tobelo, with its flat land leading to a good harbour on the North coast, supports the business of cargo trade.

In addition, Tobelo has good potential for trading timber, since the surrounding forests contain trees such as *meranti* (Shorea), gofasa (Vitex gofassus), *kayu besi* (Intsia), and *linggua* (Pferocarpus). The company PT Widuri, located in the village of Katana has begun to manage the timber industry. Tobelo is also a city of banks for the exchange of money resulting from the banana agro industry, PT GAI, located in Galela. In 1995, around a billion rupiah passed through Tobelo each week as a result of exporting bananas to Japan (Risakotta: 1995a). The change of status of the North Moluccas from a regency *(kabupaten)* into a province is expected to raise the status of the Tobelo area. The government of the North Moluccas, with the agreement of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (*Departemen Dalam Negeri)*, planned to change four districts in the North Moluccas from the status of Districts into Regencies. Tobelo is one of the Districts being prepared for an increased role in developing the new Province of the North Moluccas.

However, at the same time, there was interest within the government of the North Moluccas in choosing Malifut as the capital of the new regency of North Halmahera. This might be possible if Malifut included the five villages of Kao that contained the gold mine run by a jointed company, an Australian company, named Nusa Halmahera Minerals and the Indonesian Mining Enterprises (PT Aneka Tambang) which is a State Owned Enterprise (BUMN). With the increased prosperity provided by the 1,672,967 hectar operation area of the gold mine,[308] Malifut could enter the competition to become the capital of the regency due to the income from its local natural resources. According to Makian government officials, the five villages of Kao failed to be incorporated into the District of Makian Malifut because several Christian bureaucrats who, were expert in planning, manipulated the process.[309] The Regional Government issued a document called PP 42, 1999, which purposed to socialize the process of joining the five villages into the plan to make Makian Malifut as a new regency in Northern Halmahera. However the villages rejected the plan and Christian officials were suspected manipulating their emotions in order to support the interests of the Church, GMIH (Kasman and Oesman: 2000).

Competition over whether Tobelo or Malifut might become the capital of the new regency in the Province of the North Moluccas was connected with the potential natural resources of the whole area. In addition to the potential of Kao/Malifut, Tobelo and Galela, a timber corporation named PT Taiwi, (part of the Barito Pacific Timber Group), was operating in Jailolo-Sidangoli. In the area of Morotai there is a factory for canning fish for export**.** In addition, PT Weda Bay Nickel operates a gold mine and PT Aneka Tambang (Antam-Buli) is exploring nickel

[308] The Nusa Halmahera Minerals is the second largest gold mine exploration after Freeport Indonesia, which has an operation area of about 2,610,182 hectars (Kompas, July 16, 2004, 1).
[309] From my interview with an official from the local government of the North Moluccas (*Pemda Malut*), in November, 1999.

deposits.[310] And Loloda appears to have potential for gold mining.[311] Thus, as was noted by a Muslim official, "…with the carrying out of decentralization laws No. 22 and 25 in 1999, concerning regional autonomy and the balance of finances between the centre and local areas, this area (the North Moluccas), will grow quickly."[312] Halmahera will become a centre for industry that should not be underestimated.

Unfortunately, conflict threatens development. In February 1999, the head of the Farmers Association did not distribute all the compensation given by the Banana Company to settle the farmer's complaints about the low price given for their lands. In the farmer's meeting in Ngidiho, in September 1999, the farmers kept raising the issue. Moreover, among the critical farmers there were some Christians who criticized the Head of the Farmer's Association who was from the Muslim village of Toweka. The Banana Company didn't want to know about what happened to the compensation money after they paid it. Officials from the Banana Company told me that the Head of the Farmers Association sometime came to their head office to threaten them.[313] During this time, when the land conflict in Kao-Malifut was also a great concern to all of the people in the North Moluccas, rumours and accusations against Christians shifted attention away from the corruption of a large amount of money by the Farmer's Association. Before my departure to Java in November 1999, I interviewed labourers at the Banana Company and found out that suspicions were spreading among them. They still came to work, but they had begun to polarize on the basis of religion.

6.3.2.2. Government Officials in Tobelo

After the violent riots in Tidore and Ternate, the Christians who originated from Halmahera returned home to Tobelo. Among those who returned to Tobelo were Christian officials from the civil services of the North Moluccas. It was these officials who were accused by Muslim officials from the government of the North Moluccas of organizing the attacks against the Makian people in Malifut. Thus we can see that there were various local political agendas that contributed to the increase of conflict in Halmahera. Actually, the Christian officials from the government of the North Moluccas and the GMIH church tactically supported the position of the Makian officials at the level of the Province of the North Moluccas, because they also supported the location of the Provincial Capital in Central Halmahera, rather than in Ternate. This was consistent with the feasibility study carried out by *Bappenas* Level II (Planning Commission for Level II Areas), of the North Moluccas. One of the key officials in *Bappenas* Level II was a Christian from Tobelo. The eviction of Christians from Ternate began with the

[310] "DPR Setujui Perpu No 1/2004 tentang Penambangan di Hutan Lindung" (Kompas, July 16, 2004). Along with the Nuasa Halmahera Minerals, the total size of the exploration area provided by the natural resources in Halmahera Island is about 1, 822,407 hectars.
[311] cf. (Kasman and Oesman: 2000, 60-61). See also (Tomagola: 2000a) especially footnote 11 on page 3.
[312] (Kasman and Oesman: 2000, 60).
[313] My interview in November, 1999 in Galela.

houses of Christian officials from the government of the North Moluccas, who originated from Tobelo.

My research from the field differs from the analysis in "Tobelo Rusuh,"[314] in which the writer says that the Christian leaders from Tobelo carried out political negotiations with the Sultan of Ternate as a means of causing division among the Muslims. According to this writer, the Christians gave support to the Sultan of Ternate to become a candidate for Governor of the North Moluccas. Actually, a local newspaper reported the names of potential candidates for Governor who had been suggested by the people. These included the names of Muslim leaders, but there were also Christian names mentioned, for example Prof. Dr. J. L. Nanere. Apparently the GMIH church was open to giving support to the candidacy of someone from the North Moluccas other than the Sultan of Ternate, and especially to a Christian candidate, or perhaps someone who already had political experience in the government of the North Moluccas.

6.4. Efforts to Overcome the Violence

This subsection will begin with an explanation of the further actions conducted by the local government to prevent the eruption of violence as the rumours and suspicions grew. Meetings began from the district up to the level of village.

6. 4.1. The Role of the *Sariloha* Group

On the second day after I came to Ngidiho in August 1999, a meeting was held between the Consultative Council of Leaders of the District and the directors of the *Sariloha* organization. The *Sariloha* group was formed at the end of January 1999, two weeks after the riots in Ambon broke out. The *Sariloha* group was formed to provide a vehicle for promoting brotherhood and sisterhood among the people of Galela. Since its formation, *Sariloha* carried out a campaign to promote living together in brother/sisterhood. They had tried to elucidate how to guard the people against being swept away by rumours of riots. The Director of Sariloha, who is a Muslim, is the Head of the Office for Religious Affairs of the District of Galela. The Secretary of *Sariloha* is the leader of the GMIH for the District of Galela.

Unfortunately, the members of *Sariloha*, who included community leaders from Galela and religious leaders from the district level, did not seem to have much impact at the level of the people. The Muslim *Imams* and Christian ministers who worked at the village level were not directly involved in the campaigns to promote Galelan traditions and religious life. The last time Sariloha pursued a common task was at a meeting where the political and religious elite of Galela met to discuss the problem of aid for the Christians to Kao. Ironically, religious riots broke out later in Galela after rumours emerged that the Christians of Galela gave aid to the refugees from Kao. After that, the activities of *Sariloha* in leading uplifting campaigns concerning religious harmony no longer functioned.

[314] (Kasman and Oesman: 2000, 58).

At the first meeting I attended, the Head of *Sariloha* announced that the central government in Jakarta was giving an award to the Head of Religious Affairs for the District of Galela, namely the trophy for first class in exemplary work. He was honoured for the success achieved by Galela in protecting the safety of religious life in the Moluccas. This honour was announced publicly, so that all could learn from the success the government in protecting religious harmony in Galela even though riots had begun Ambon. Little did we know what was about to happen.

6.4.2. The Meeting of Community Leaders in Ngidiho

Since rumours and suspicions were growing, the District meeting for Galela concluded that they should hold meetings at the village level throughout Galela to discuss the Christians explanation of their aid for refugees from Kao. In these meetings they also would discuss how to anticipate the possibility that riots could spread to Galela. That evening, the village Head of Ngidiho gathered all the village officials, religious leaders, community figures and youth leaders to discuss the results of the meeting at the District level and the subsequent actions that must be carried out to protect the safety of the village.

The meeting in Ngidiho was held on the 14th of November, beginning at 10 PM and ending at about 3 AM. The meeting reached a decision to reject the possibility of riots in Ngidiho. The government of the village would begin by setting out the points of their decisions in the meeting, in order to socialize them among the people. This socialization would take place both among the people of the village and also among those who lived in the Banana Plantation.[315]

The meeting began with discussion about the reformation movement of students in Java, which they felt was causing chaos all over the country. These community leaders felt that the demonstrations occurring in Java were not appropriate to be followed by the people in the North Moluccas. Their reason was that the people of Java were not emotional, whereas the Moluccans become quickly upset, so that it would be easy for riots to take place. The meeting also paid serious attention to the possibility of religious riots that might arise out of small fights between groups of young people who were drunk (both Muslim and Christian). Often a drunken youth would strike someone else, without conscious reason. Therefore, in a situation of rising social conflict, the village government hoped that the religious leaders would give guidance to the youth, so that they would be careful. Their freedom should not be used by irresponsible parties to create conflict between the village young people at a time when they were drunk. At the same time, the older villagers should not take the law into their own hands and beat the young people when they were drunk, since that could also cause fights in the neighbourhood.

[315] The following account of the meeting is taken from my own notes. I was the only woman invited to attend the meeting.

At the same time, the community leaders were reminded to ask the women to restrain themselves from gossip and keep their mouths closed. The explosion of rumours about riots, according to this meeting, started from women who returned from selling products in the Inpres market in the village of Soa Sio. They returned to their neighbourhoods in Ngidiho with stories about the preparations of the Galelans, both Muslims and Christians, in anticipation of the possibility of riots. The fear was that violence might occur as a result of the riots that had already taken place in Kao-Malifut, Tidore, Ternate and villages in North Halmahera such as Pajahe.

The people who attended the meeting agreed that the District government should clearly confirm or deny the rumours that were circulating. The government should find out how the rumours emerged, where they came from, how someone heard the rumours and then repeated them in the form of stories to someone else. In connection with this, the meeting also discussed how to differentiate between rumours and facts. Facts are stories that are true. However rumours emerge from gossip that cannot be proved, but are nevertheless dangerous because the people can be influenced to believe them. If a person believes a rumour, he or she is already in the process of changing the rumour into a fact. Therefore it was imperative for the people to report all rumours to the village government.

If a rumour was connected to religion, the people should be instructed to report it to the village leaders and not to the religious leaders. The instructions to report religious rumours to the village government rather than to religious leaders were justified because the village Head is the one who is directly responsible for the unity and safety of all the people. Besides this, the village forum was conscious of the case of Ambon, where conflict was stimulated among the people based on religion and the religious leaders were unable to separate themselves from the conflict.

Although the community leaders did not want riots to take place in Ngidiho, they did discuss how it would be if, finally, violence did break out in the village. A village leader, who was Muslim, suggested that if there was an attack against Ngidiho by Christians from another village, then the Christians of Ngidiho should give protection to the Muslims of the village. However other members of the forum felt that this would be hard to carry out because the Christians were only 22% of the total population of Ngidiho. The forum then agreed that the Muslims in Ngidiho should guarantee the protection of the Christian people of Ngidiho if there were an attack by Muslims from another village. This decision was built on the reality that the Christian and Muslim communities in Ngidiho had lived in peace together for a long time. Neither Christianity nor Islam were new religions to the area.

The forum of leaders also agreed with a suggestion to ask recent settlers from Makian and Tidore to return to their home villages. However other settlers from outside Galela who had lived for a long time in Ngidiho were permitted to stay in Galela. The forum decided to construct a gate across the road to control the coming and going of strangers through the area of Ngidiho. On the day after the

meeting, the people made a gate across the road, located close to the house of the village Head. The construction of the gate was the only concrete action carried out as a result of the meeting. The agreement to socialize the decisions of the meeting in each neighbourhood (RT), had not taken place before I left on November 25, 1999. Unfortunately, the effort to come close to the people in order to suppress the rumours of riots was not carried out in any intensive or structural manner by the village government.

The village Head complained to me about the difficulty of publicizing the leaders decisions in order to prevent people from becoming involved with violence. He said that it was very difficult to determine a correct attitude towards the increasing tendency towards violent conflict. The actions taken by heterogeneous villages such as Ngidiho, where Christians and Muslims lived together peacefully, was different from what took place in homogeneous villages like Soa Sio and Duma. Soa Sio is a homogeneous Muslim village, while Duma is a homogeneous Christian village. The homogeneous villages did not have experience of living together with other religious groups in an atmosphere of mutual trust and social negotiation between people of different religions. According to the village Head, the people from homogeneous villages were more prepared to face the possibility of riots. The homogenous villages were already arming themselves with guns, bows and arrows, swords and spears, etc., in preparation for battle. In Ngidiho most people were totally unprepared for war.

Even when village leaders in Galela took responsible action to discuss and suppress the possibility of violence, it appears from this account that the power of the dominant local media (stories, rumours, and fears spread by the mobility of traders), were much more powerful than official declarations of government officials.

Several days after this meeting, the former village Head, who had become an *imam* (leader in the mosque), of Ngidiho stopped by *Oom* Din's house to talk with me. He asked me not to worry about the increase in tensions that was felt by the people after the violent conflict in Kao, Ternate and Tidore. It was this man who requested in the meeting, that if riots broke out, only older people, i.e. male adults, should be allowed to go out and face the rioters from other villages. Young people, who are emotional, women and children should stay inside their houses.

Privately he told me that if riots finally broke out, he would walk weeping from end to end of the village, weeping like a person mourning the death of community between Muslims and Christians in Ngidiho. He would weep so that others would feel guilty. I did not witness whether or not this really happened, since I had already left Ngidiho before the violence broke out. However I have no doubt of the man's sincerity. *Oom* Din, who was present during this conversation, also reassured me that I was safe. He asked me to tell my husband not to worry about me because he would die before he allowed anyone to harm me.

6.4.3. The Conflicts are Doomed

In retrospect, it is easy to perceive a sense of the inevitability of violence in Galela. Even though some leaders were working and hoping to prevent violence, many felt that violence was fated and could not be stopped. Before I returned to Java, I arranged to meet with officials of the District of Galela. In my conversations with the Secretary of the District of Galela, he expressed the opinion that if religious riots took place in a nation that is based on the ideology of Pancasila, then it was fated by God. The Secretary offered this interpretation with the special note that officials of the District of Galela took sides with the officials of the Province of the North Moluccas, who are Makian, rather than with the Sultan of Ternate. Therefore, he said, the suffering of the Makians must be repaid by the Christians who participated in helping the people of Kao.

This official then explained to me the meaning of a *jihad* war that would be carried out by Muslims. This war would be waged if there were insults to Muslims, such as had been suffered by the Makians. Therefore if there was an order to wage a *jihad* war, it must be regarded as a part of Fate. At that time, this official did not mention the unsubstantiated rumour that circulated that the anger of the Muslim community was caused by actions of the Kao people who, during the fighting, threw the Holy Koran onto the streets of Malifut. However this conversation, over a month before the fighting broke out in Galela, illustrates how political alliances, personal relationships and religious convictions combined in the shaping of a discourse that justified violence.

6.4.4. The Forum for Solidarity in Halmahera and the Youth of *Gema Hilo*

The Forum for Solidarity in Halmahera (abbreviated as FSH) was formed in Tobelo early in November 1999. The FSH was established to suppress the rumours of riots that were circulating among the people. The members of the FSH included Muslim and Christian public figures and carried out peacemaking activities in both Muslim and Christian villages. To show their support for this effort, the people signed a banner proclaiming love and peace that was 50 meters long. There were about 5,000 people who signed the banner. About fifteen workers carried the Love and Peace banner from house to house, collecting signatures.

On December 22, 1999, the FSH met at a command post located in the house of a Chinese in Tobelo who originated from Morotai. About 10 people attended the meeting, five of them prominent Muslim figures and five of them prominent Christians. On that night, one of the Muslim leaders scolded another Muslim leader by asking why he chose to only carry out peacemaking in his own villages, rather than cooperating with the rest of the group. The *Gema Hilo* youth were already suspicious of the man who was criticized because he often travelled in the middle of the night, using the car of the local clinic *(puskesmas)*. The *Gema Hilo* youth from the South of Tobelo had seen this prominent man, together with the District Head of Tobelo (*Camat*), returning to Tobelo from the South in the wee hours of the morning.

The man answered that he was approaching the higher officials who were in his own network while the members of FSH were approaching people at the grass roots level. He always attended the meetings of the Council of Area Leaders at the District level (abbreviated as *MUSPIKA Kecamatan*). In spite of his networking, not all were happy with his activities. If this man suddenly appeared at a *MUSPIKA* meeting, the Chief of Police and the Military Head (*Danramil*) would immediately leave the meeting room. On the other hand he was close to the Camat. The Camat of Tobelo and his wife were both Makians. Since the violent conflict had broken out in Kao, the Camat's wife no longer stayed in Tobelo. However the mysterious Muslim leader was a medical doctor who was native to Tobelo and had family ties with Tobelo Christians through his mother.

The dual role of the Camat, along with the doctor, could be seen in the gathering of funds from the people for the safety of Tobelo. Donations were at first all received from Chinese business people in Tobelo. A powerful Chinese figure gathered the donations and then gave them directly to the Camat and the doctor. The people formed *Gema Hilo* in order to guard the public safety of Tobelo and help from the police and military. The Camat used the funds that were gathered from the Chinese business people to pay for the operational costs of *Gema Hilo*, as long as they guarded the safety of Tobelo.

The *Gema Hilo* group were relatively successful in guarding religious unity until one night in the middle of November 1999, some of the *Gema Hilo* youth in the village of Gura came across a tailor who was sewing white pants, robes and head bands. The police of Tobelo confiscated three hundred white garments, which later became known as the clothing of the jihad, and the tailor was arrested. The doctor, who was friends with the *Camat*, tried to free the tailor, but the Christian youth would not allow it. However they failed in their attempt to find out who was the mastermind (*dalang*), who gave instructions to the tailor. The case was never tried in court. The people of Kao also discovered *jihad* clothing in Pediwang, Kao, when the people checked all the buses that came from Ternate.

After this event, the activities of *Gema Hilo* stopped. The Christian youth started to form their own forum in order to protect the safety of Tobelo. This forum was named, Forum for Communication in Halmahera (FKH). Their first activity was to carry out a campaign to evict from Tobelo anyone from the Makian, Kayoa or Tidore ethnic groups, since they were suspected of inciting the people. The members of FKH included young men and women, including a leader who was a woman minister. FKH issued a statement criticizing the military's selective prosecution of rioters based on the concept of Human Rights (*Hak Asasi Manusia* or HAM). Drawing from their experience of violent conflict in Ambon, they felt that the rhetoric of human rights had been misused by the military to refrain from stern action against Muslim rioters. However the Muslims of Tobelo criticized the FKH declaration for rejecting the importance of human rights.

The formation of FKH by the Christian youth drew a reaction from the Muslim youth of Tobelo who felt that the Christian youth were acting macho. Therefore, even though the leaders of the Synod of GMIH started a dialogue forum between

Muslims and Christians, that involved the *imams* from the great mosque (*Mesjid Raya*), these efforts failed to calm the sharp competition going on between the groups of Christian and Muslim youth.[316]

Community forums based genealogical myths or on rational divisions according to religion and age were unable to prevent the coming the violence. The breakdown of *Gema Hilo* was the beginning of the end of peace. The new "peacekeeping groups" were created out of fear and competition with each other. The local governments both at the village and district levels were powerless to overcome the fears of the two communities. When a transition crisis becomes ritualised it also becomes dangerous. Mary Douglas says, "Not only is transition itself dangerous, but also the rituals of segregation are the most dangerous phase of the rites" (Douglas: 1988 [1966], 96). Ritual segregation of the two communities became more and more pronounced in the period leading up to the outbreak of war.

6.5. Conclusion

People often use symbolic elements from their local culture with a variety of motivations. The Halmaherans dance the *Cakalele* with different motivations and purposes during a period of warfare than they do during peace. The essence of the *Cakalele* that was danced by both Muslims and Christians to celebrate war was different from the *Cakalele* danced in a wedding ceremony. In this chapter, I have explained how the discourse about violent conflict in North Halmahera was created, organized and propagated. Mechanisms of terror created political instability that encouraged riots and disbelief among the people. A powerful group intended to use the mechanisms of terror to establish its domination and control over the people. A conflict can occur because of many factors. Disinformation is only one aspect that leads to the explosion of conflict.

Media functions as an instrument of social mobilization in conflict situations.[317] Some of the Islamic media, such as *Republika*, *Sabili*, etc., seemed determined to portray the conflict as a purely religious conflict even though the local people experienced the conflict in several stages. The sources of news were from outside the conflict area and were unable to understand the situation directly from the local people. This made it very difficult to distinguish fact from fiction, fear from fantasy, knowledge from suspicion.

In both Kao and Tobelo, there were substantial economic, political, and cultural conflicts of interest that support a "rational-material" explanation of the violence. However in Ngidiho the Muslims and Christians had kinship ties with each other

[316] From an interview with the leadership of the Synod of GMIH in Tobelo in November 1999.

[317] Agus Sudibyo argues that media played an important role in escalating the conflict in the Moluccas. He concludes that public media cannot free itself from bias based on ideological similarities and personal, organisational and economic interests. National media tended to spread the news of what was happening in the local settings of the Moluccas without having a reporter in the field. Sudibyo's analysis shows the role of the national media in shaping perceptions of the conflict in the Moluccas especially for the people in Java (Sudibyo:2001).

and were not substantially alienated by conflicting political, economic or ethnic differences. The violence in Galela was the bitter fruit of a discourse of fear, shaped and moulded by imported information carried by the locally available forms of communication. The local media, consisting of mostly oral communication empowered by high levels of mobility, created the illusion of predestined violence. Conflicts that had origins far outside the boundaries of Galela led to unimaginable slaughter.

Religions, with their noble values, often dream of creating a grand, religiously based hegemony, based on the Truth. But religious identities are formed by a history of conflict that makes them vulnerable to manipulation. They are often used for political purposes to bring conflict between those who follow different beliefs. Religions view the death of martyrs as holy. However these dead are victims of political violence, produced by powerful groups, who callously use the numbers of deaths to statistically justify the violent political struggle in which they are engaged.[318] Muslims and Christians were both perpetuators and victims of political violence that followed patterns that were inherited from the New Order period.[319]

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[318] See Piliang (Kompas, February 10, 2000).

[319] Some people connected Suharto's name with the *'dalang'* (puppet master), who provoked riots all over Indonesia. The assumption behind this suspicion is that the riots were a sign that Suharto wanted to survive in power. But was Suharto really the *dalang*? See Tobing (Kompas, August 21, 2000). This accusation was easy to make because most people believe Suharto was able to create political history according to his own interests as long as he held power. Maruli Tobing writes that he doubts the truth of the discourse that claims Suharto was the dalang of the riots. Tobing puts more emphasis on factors connected with the transfer of government that stimulated instability in society. Political instability then gave expression to attempts to defend territory and the borders of an area. I can agree with Tobing's opinion. But in the case of the North Moluccas, Tobing's analysis must be connected with the question of why the government changed territorial boundaries in such a one sided manner, without a process of socialization and communication with the people affected. Of course there is no one in Indonesia who will admit to being the dalang who used religion as a political tool to attract support from the majority group in society. Such a confession would result in the *dalang* being cursed by humanity. Essentially the people would know that they were being manipulated and deceived by political actors who dared admit publicly to creating this destructive scenario. The theory that Suharto is the *dalang* behind the riots provokes pro and contra opinions among the people. Those who doubt Suharto's involvement question how the riots could go on and on, if only one individual, or the family of Cendana bankrolled them. (Cendana is the neighborhood where the Suharto family lives in Jakarta. See Tobing (Kompas, August 21, 2000). However those who believe Suharto was involved, argue that the riots all over Indonesia were motivated by the desire to protect an entire system that is still very strong in the structure of Indonesian politics. Maesa W. D. claims there is a connection between Suhartoism and the Laskar Jihad. See Maesa (Telegraf, August 14, 2000). Regardless of the pro and contra of Suharto's involvement, there are strong indications from the phenomena of riots in the field that indicate the use of military power, channeled through the aggressiveness of the masses from various religious groups. Adi Sasono, as explained in Chapter V, was a *dalang* in the overthrow of Suharto although he only represented one group working for Suharto's demise. He could not have played that role if a *gamelan,* an orchestra made up of students and independent social groups had not supported him. During Habibie's presidency, riots began in Ambon. But who would admit that religious riots were planned, similar to the demonstrations for bringing down Suharto? The military, which appeared to be neutral, also played a part in the total political drama of that period. It follows than, that the drama of political violence through riots involved various groups that shared a similar interest in power. Therefore the question asked by many people of 'who is the *dalang*,' is not very important in the snowballing of riots. Just a little push

It is interesting to understand why people are so quick to say that the riots were the result of the instigation of *provocateurs*.[320] By referring to a *provocateur*, or dalang, a person can develop various kinds of analysis without fearing threats to his or her safety. On the other hand, if a person should mention the name of the *provocateur*, it would indeed result in a serious threat to the writer. We may see a direct example of this dynamic in the case of Tomagola, who accused several people by name, of being *provocateurs* of the riots in the Moluccas. His analysis was published in the national newspaper, but only a few days later, he retracted his accusations in the same newspaper.

The choice of certain areas was a very real phenomenon that can be observed after the anti-Christian movement in Halmahera started to have a structural affect on riots in various other areas of Indonesia. At that time, the riots began almost simultaneously in various places. Amien Rais said that the riots, like a blazing ember moved from area to area as a reaction to the violent conflict that took place in the Moluccas, and especially that had just taken place in Ambon.[321] Was this spread of riots truly the simple result of sincere people who were moved by the basic human suffering of their fellow human beings? Actually, it is likely that the riots in Mataram were the result of the manipulations by a *provocateur*.[322] Ironically, the low level *provocateur* was arrested, while his powerful boss was left untouched. The Sultan of Yogyakarta, Sri Sultan Hamengkubuwono X, said he himself had been contacted by someone who claimed to be able to contact the *provocateur* so that no disturbances would take place within the area of Yogyakarta.[323]

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could set the ball rolling at a terrific speed, gaining size at ever rotation. Like a bomb just waiting to be thrown, the rolling ball would have devastating impact in certain locations.

[320] The word provocateur has become a loaded word in the politics of violence that is now endemic in Indonesia. This term that is usually used by the military has now become a common term among ordinary people. The word was first used in the political practices of Italy, as shown by Machiavelli. The Latin word provocare means challenge. According to Harimurti Kridalaksana, the word provocateur is unknown in the objectification of Anglo-Saxon politics. But the term agent provocateur is a French term. The politics of violence in Indonesia uses the term provocateur to mean *dalang* (puppet master), i.e. the master and primary player in the Javanese art of *wayang* (puppet drama). This meaning is close to the Latin term, auctor intellectualis. See Kridalaksana (Kompas, February 4,1999). However, the lexical meaning of provocateur apparently does not provide a means for the government to act against people who are suspected of actions intending to foment lawless actions among the people. Several community leaders have urged that the term provocateur should be further defined in a normative way. This indicates that they know what is meant by the term provocateur. See Haz (Kompas, January 29, 2000). Megawati suggested that a provocateur is someone who receives money for the work of inciting other people to act in a lawless manner. See Megawati (Kompas, March 9, 1999). In military circles, especially the Intelligence Branch, provocateur is used to refer to particular persons who promote mutual suspicions among different groups in society. See Tobing (Kompas, August 21, 2000). In fact the Indonesian Army caused a sensation with its claim that there were about 5,000 provocateurs who were trained outside the country, to disrupt the election campaigns during the month of May 1999. This claim was written in Kompas, May 8, 1999, as the opinion of the Commander of V/Brawijaya, Mayjen TNI Ryamizard Ryacudu, who was quoted in a report from Khotib Aam PBNU, KH Aqiel Siradj.

[321] See Rais (Forum Keadilan. No.41, January 23, 2000, 80-81).

[322] See Kompas (January 19, 2000).

[323] See Kompas (April 26, 1999).

The police claim that they must be obedient to the legal norm of presumption of innocence unless proven guilty. Therefore it is very difficult to arrest a *provocateur* from the upper class.[324] They also use the principle of respect for Human Rights as another excuse for not firmly guarding the peace. This reasoning is connected with the long history of the "New Order" that used violence in its politics of accommodation in order to tame the people. In a situation of political transition, the logic of Human Rights is used to protect the groups that use violence with impunity, and free the police from the responsibility for keeping the peace. However these police excuses need to be questioned. According to the research of the Commission for Human Rights (*Komnas HAM*), there has never been a serious effort to investigate those responsible for the violence in the Moluccas.[325]

In such a condition, where the police function is paralysed, private soldiers, who are paid by rich people, provide the primary security in the nation. This could be viewed as opening up a new field of employment for local thugs. This type of situation is fostered by the difficult economic situation. Recruits to private armies are easily manipulated by the status of being a private soldier. Feelings of solidarity in suffering, history, religion, or just the pull of money, are also potent means of manipulation. For example, many members of the Laskar Jihad were recruited from unemployed, marginalized youth (Fontana: 1993, 20; Grant: 1997, 49). The military denies that private soldiers, such as the Laskar Jihad, are a legitimate part of national defence.[326] Nevertheless, given the abundant evidence of links between the military and the Laskar Jihad, it is not unreasonable to suspect that some factions of the military supported the Laskar Jihad. [327]

In Halmahera, it is clear that the riots were not just the result of the local people's will. National politics transformed regional power struggles over control of local natural resources. Political instability then gave expression to attempts at defending territories or the borders of an area. The elite used a politics of violence to force the people to defend themselves. The only means of defence was through direct participation in the war. Political rituals swept people up in an overwhelming movement that forced them to go to war.

The people defended themselves at two levels. First, among the common people, those who had formerly lived together in peace attacked and murdered each other. The people had to free themselves from their awareness of family and kinship networks. To justify their actions the people employed a new synthesis combining universal religious identity with local, ancestral rituals that

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[324] See Kompas (January 26, 2000).

[325] According to the Commission for Investigating the Violation of Basic Human Rights in the Mediation for the Moluccas (KPMM), the information and communication that has already been gathered by the government and the military has never been properly coordinated. The state has never handled the information in an integral or comprehensive manner in the areas of conflict. See Kompas (April 19, 2000).

[326] See Bernas (April 25, 2000)

[327] The same dynamic can be observed in the military's involvement in creating the pro-integration militias in East Timor (Robinson: 2002).

strengthened their structures of power and claims to the truth. This stimulated them to commit violent acts. Ritual gave sacred legitimacy to their actions, promised invulnerability to their bodies and clarity against the ambiguities of their identity and status (Douglas: 1988 [1966], 103-104).

Secondly, at the level of the elite, leaders of each group published many books and articles that aimed to give a rational explanation that would justify the warfare in which they were involved.[328] These books and articles developed a political discourse that rewrites the genealogical history of their tribe and religion, claiming a uniqueness over other tribes and religions that has been passed down from their ancestors.[329] Even though these interpretations of history lack internal consistency they still provide an interesting source of social discourse that springs from the suffering of this profound tragedy.

[328] See for example, the book published from the Muslim side by Kasman and Oesman (2000) and from the Christian side by J. A. Nanere (see Nanere: 2000).

[329] See especially the discourse that dominates the book edited by Kasman and Oesman (see Kasman and Oesman: 2000).

Chapter VII
The Politics of Memory and Forgetting

> "Where memories come from, how we create them, and how "true" they are, are questions that require perceptive and thoughtful consideration, for memories illuminate what it means to be human and alive" (McBeth: 1993, 151).

Political changes in national and regional society created religious segregation in villages. Each party defended its beliefs, pride, and access to material resources. Different interest groups used ancestral and religious rituals to manipulate the emotions of the people. Rituals brought symbols of war from the past into the present life of the people.

This chapter examines how memory and forgetting structured the politics of reconciliation after the ritualized violence stopped. It begins with a description of how survivors of the civil war shaped and interpreted rituals of reconciliation. The people modified their rituals by combining universal and local principles that are rooted in their common experience. A system of negotiation through rituals that is based on a common commitment to material justice is crucial for understanding the process of reconciliation in Halmahera. This chapter addresses the question: how did the people construct rituals out of the material principles of their religious and cultural life to achieve reconciliation?

7.1. Meetings at the Boundary Point

Ethnic groups construct both secular and messianic national ideologies to sustain an imagined identity and inspire the political struggles of their people.[330] Political labelling based on divisions between the religious loyalties of the people resulted in sharp divisions in the society. People are divided by identities corresponding to ethnicity, religion and race. In the North Moluccas and elsewhere in Indonesia, the boundaries between people are not only imaginary but also a physical reality. The violence in the North Moluccas resulted in the geographical division of society by religion. Muslim refugees fled to Ternate and Tidore while Christian refugees escaped to Tobelo (Northern Halmahera) and Manado - Bitung in North Sulawesi.

Imagined religious identities that are constructed by violence threaten the physical identity of a common people. However, when people are isolated from each other by physical threats their physical segregation may only continue as long as the physical danger persists. The people respond by searching for free space in social relationships with parties that are not threatening to them. They free themselves from the limitations of imagined space that was created by their different political

[330] See (Anderson:1999).

identities and negotiate renewed relationships through economic exchange based on assumptions of equality.

Unlike the violence, the reconciliation process is hardly mentioned by the mass media. Academic analysis also tends to focus on the violence and neglect the less dramatic process of building peace. When I returned to the North Moluccas in 2002, my 'family' in Ngidiho assured me that it was safe. But many people in Amsterdam and even in Java, were worried about my trip. No one knew about the peace process. This chapter examines how the actors in the reconciliation process work through larger structures such as families, villages, economic institutions, churches, mosques, the government and the military. The process of reconciliation started with economic practices that directly addressed the material needs of the survivors. People with different religious identities began to trade with each other again. However, individual actions for peace are not enough. They need to be followed with formal, public and institutional actions to establish reconciliation.

7.1.1. A Story of Fickle Fortune

Pak Thamrin is a Muslim from the village of Bisui in East Gane, in the eastern part of southern Halmahera. After two nights of sailing he arrived safety in Bitung, North Sulawesi. The skin of this fifty old man was burned from his journey crossing the Moluccan Sea to sell copra in the northern part of Sulawesi, near Manado. Two other men accompanied him. One was about 25 years old and wore a military uniform. The other was about the same age, dressed in casual clothes. The military man was paid to guard their trip from Halmahera to Bitung. After the boat let down its anchor in Bitung harbour, *Pak* Thamrin jumped carefully off the boat onto the pier of the harbour. He walked slowly to reach the crowd where people were gathering. He looked happy seeing somebody he knew among the crowd. *Pak* Onni, a Christian Chinese-Gane man shouted loudly to him, "Hoi, what are you bringing?" Pak Thamrin replies, "Ce! Only a little copra!" *Pak* Onni shouts back, "I'll take it!"

Before the 1999-2000 violence occurred, *Pak* Oni used to travel around the eastern and the western parts of southern Halmahera, buying copra. He also sold necessities to the people he visited. His boat was like a travelling store. People bought his wares after they had sold their harvest. However, his boat was burned in the 1999-2000 violence and he and his family had to leave their home in Ternate. With his new refugee status he could not continue his work. Even if he could get hold of a boat, as a Christian he was not allowed to enter areas considered Muslim territory. Therefore, the system of trade in the north Moluccas changed. Instead of a Christian copra collector coming to the villages, Muslims delivered their produce to a town where there were buyers waiting for their harvest. *Pak* Thamrin took this responsibility along with two other Muslim businessmen. Bitung, which is located in the northern part of Manado, was their target because there is an oil company there.

Bringing some porters with him, *Pak* Onni went to the boat of *Pak* Thamrin. The porters carried out each sack of copra to the closed store where *Pak* Onni recommended he sell the copra. After measurement, the total amount of copra was 23 tons or 23,000 kg. The store paid Rp. 2,100, per kg. That meant that *Pak* Thamrin received Rp. 4,800,000 ($533)[331], while *Pak* Onni received Rp. 1,200,000 ($150) as a commission for arranging for *Pak* Thamrin to sell his copra at the store. *Pak* Onni receives Rp. 50 for each kg. of copra he brings to the store. *Pak* Onni told me, this good fortune is rare. He doesn't often get such money since he lost his business. With no financial capital, his fortune is determined by his success in assisting the collectors of copra who come from the north Moluccas. Sometimes he only gets Rp. 20,000 - 30,000 for a commission or just some money for bus transportation given by the store, which always encourages him to look for new suppliers.

7.1.2. Continuing Business

Continuing business after the violence was necessary for the people. However, they returned to everyday affairs cautiously, without endangering themselves. The military's provision of security became important to people's lives after the war. For protecting their security, the military charged the people. A Chinese trader told me that the cost of selling products became higher due to service charges for physical safety that they had to pay to the military. At the beginning of November 1999, the Chinese communities fled from Ternate but left behind their stores to be run by the military or other parties appointed by the authorities in the region. A Chinese family, which owned the biggest supermarket in Ternate, hired naval officers to continue their business. The supermarket had a normal turnover of Rp. 30 million per day, before the violence erupted. After the violence, its turnover decreased sharply to about Rp. 5 million a day. The decrease in turnover was linked to the decline of the kinds of products sold. The store mainly sold basic necessities, but there was a limited supply. It took about two weeks on a waiting list for a person to buy a product because they were quickly sold out. The owners stocked a limited supply in order to minimize their risk in case the riots broke out again.

The government of North Moluccas supported the decision to continue operation of stores owned by the Chinese-Ternate traders. Due to the violence in November and December 1999, many Chinese-Ternate residents left Ternate. Some hired local people to manage their businesses. The Sultan of Ternate guaranteed security to protect the Chinese area where all of the stores are located. However the Chinese-Ternate traders closed their stores after the Sultan of Ternate was forced out of Ternate by his political rival, the Sultan of Tidore at the end of December 1999. The closing of Chinese-Ternate stores hurt the economy in the new province. During the absence of the Chinese-Ternate traders, other traders, such as the Arab Ternatese tried to fill the void. However, the local people complained that the products the Arab-Ternate traders sold were more expensive than the ones sold by the Chinese traders.

[331] This was the exchange rate at the time of that transaction. In 2003 the exchange rate was considerably lower.

The Arab-Ternate traders had access to trade through Makasar in Southern Sulawesi. However, the Chinese-Ternate traders network was through Manado-Bitung, Northern Sulawesi. The cost of selling was affected by the cost of transportation and the distances between islands. The trade distance between Ternate and Manado is closer and cheaper than the one between Makasar and Ternate. Even though the distance between Ternate - Makasar is farther, the fact that both areas have a majority Muslim population suggests the reason why the trade network was considered safe for the Arab-Ternate traders.

Considering the need for reducing the high cost of living in Ternate, in August 2000 the government of North Moluccas approached the Chinese-Ternate traders who were refugees in North Sulawesi. They invited the Chinese-Ternate traders to return to Ternate with special security protection. In August 2000, Ternate was inundated with about 111,000 Muslim refugees from all over North Moluccas. The special invitation to the Chinese traders from Ternate is remarkable because about 90% of the Chinese-Ternate traders are Christian and 10% of them are Confucian or Buddhist. Prior to the violence, the Chinese-Ternatese were about 10% of the total population of Ternate, but controlled most of the business.[332]

In August 2000, about 10 months after the violence, the Chinese Ternate traders began to return home to Ternate. The government facilitated the reopening of their stores with a special request for them to hire the military to manage and secure their stores. For example, the biggest supermarket spent about Rp. 1,500,000 per month for security. The increase was about 600% as the owner of the supermarket only spent about Rp. 250,000 per month before the violence. In addition, the profit was to be divided between the owner and the military as security officials. The owner was required to give 5% of the profits to the naval officer who managed the supermarket security while the owner stayed in Manado.

After paying other required "contributions", the owner of the supermarket complained that the remaining profits are very small. The owner entrusts the process of buying and sending supplies to his cousins whose wives are indigenous Muslims from Ternate. These new couples are Muslim. They come and go from Manado-Ternate-Manado without being afraid. In Ternate, they are not pushed out because they are accepted as Muslim. Their presence in Manado does not create a problem even though this city has accommodated whole groups of Christian refugees from areas of conflict like North Moluccas, Ambon and its neighbouring islands. The people in North Sulawesi counter the discourse of religious conflict by strengthening their relationships within their own community at the level of village, as well as accepting people who come to their area for trade purposes.[333]

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[332] The statistics of the population of Chinese-Ternate traders are derived from the northern Ternate population. In 1993, the population was about 39,423. See, Informasi Kecamatan (1993, 86).

[333] My interview was with Drs. Lengkong, who is the head of the Social Biro in the Governor's office. The interview was conducted in August 2000.

7.1.3. Longing for their Homeland

Christian refugees arrived in North Sulawesi in several stages. Based on the date of their arrival, refugees can be classified into three groups. The first group includes those who left their original home in North Moluccas after the violence broke out. For example, the Christian refugees from Ternate and Tidore escaped to Manado and Bitung in early November 1999. The second group includes those who had already moved their families to a safer region such as Manado or Bitung when they heard the rumours of riots that might take place in their home region. Most of this group were civil servants and businessmen. One example is the refugees from Tobelo who escaped before the violence occurred in December 1999. The last group is the refugees who left their area when they could not defend their land and property; they suffered terrible loss. The refugees from Galela are one example of this group. They arrived in North Sulawesi in May 2000. Because of the violence they were unable to save their property to support themselves as refugees.

The authorities located the refugees in camps according to their original districts or villages. The date of the violence also affected the location of people. Refugees from the first and third groups of arrivals stayed together. The second group tended to stay with their families or rent a house for themselves. Professional background determined the economic autonomy of refugees. For example, refugees with civil servant status in the Indonesian government could arrange to be transferred to the new region where they had settled. This opportunity encouraged the refugees to stay in their new location. A refugee who had worked at the Regency office (*Kantor Bupati*) in Tidore told me that he did not want to return to Tidore. He had already sold his land and house in Tidore. A Tidorenese bought his house. The transaction was carried out in Bitung where he and his family were staying in a refugee camp. An Islamic Tidorese acted as mediator between the buyer and the seller. Even though he had sold his property far below the standard price in Tidore, the family was happy to have some cash to start a small business to continue their new life in Bitung.

Pictures 53-55: The burnt out remains of a ruined house in Kao, August 1999; The situation in a refugee camp in Bitung, North Sulawesi; The refugees in Bitung celeberate Independence day on 17 August 2000.

Compared to civil servants and business people, the refugees with an agricultural or manual-labour background had the most difficulties. For them permanent work was limited. Manual labour placements in Bitung and Manado are only available seasonally. At times there is work at such places as food factories, oil installations, and restaurants. Because of this situation, there was a strong demand from these refugees to return to their original homes. Their desire to return was also determined by the fact that they still owned their plantations, even though their houses were damaged. The same demand could also be found in the second group of refugees, especially those with a business background. The protection of businesses belonging to the second group of refugees was provided by the military, the first and the third groups had no money to hire security officers.

The Muslim refugee groups in Ternate and Tidore also wanted to return home. As a new province, North Moluccas with Ternate as the centre of government tried to accommodate Muslim refugees from all over the region. The majority of these refugees were peasants. Neither land nor agricultural activities were

available. The lack of industrial work, as in North Sulawesi, encouraged the Muslim refugees in Ternate and Tidore to go home.

At their homes, kin-family or neighbours had managed their plantations. After security was achieved, the refugees returned to their home village and reorganized their work by involving those who had helped them during their absence. This occurred in both Muslim and Christian communities. For example, *Pak* Kasim who is a Muslim from the village of Gorua, in Tobelo, told me the story of how his plantation was managed by his Christian neighbour.[334] The neighbour, along with others from the village, worked the land along with his own plantation in order to prevent expropriation of his property by other refugees who were not from the village. Another land management arrangement occurred in Ngidiho where Muslim neighbours agreed that Christian refugees could farm their land to avoid the stealing of the plantation harvests.

7.2. The Politics of Recognition after the Riots

It is interesting to understand how Christian and Muslim groups who left their village have reoriented themselves. There is a tendency among the refugees to reorient themselves according to the material factors that link them with their place of origin rather than whether they are Muslim or Christian. The reorientation of Christian refugees from North Moluccas was aimed at supporting, spreading and recognizing their identity and solidarity with Halmahera. However, Muslim refugees identified themselves specifically as from Ternate, Tidore, or another particular district. The process of reorientation illustrates the potential strength of original location that can be recognized in different groups. Affirmation of identity from the original location is a rational category that can assist the process of reconciliation in North Moluccas because of common social-cultural practices. Agreements can be reached together by people as a community.

7.2.1. Naming Themselves

Juliet Peteet says that location is only a beginning in the struggle of identity formation (Peteet: 2000, 183). Designation of an identity linked to the identification of self with a particular location is often related to political legitimacy. Generally, identity is expressed by naming the centre of the region from which the person comes. Benedict Anderson states that the regional centre is often referred to especially in the process of solving social and political problems that occur among people who live within a multiethnic community (Anderson: 1999).

However, in the case of the refugees from North Moluccas who stayed in both North Sulawesi and Ternate-Tidore, the formation of their identity is linked with their ownership of land rather than with politics. Refugees from North Moluccas, who remained in North Sulawesi, call themselves Halmaherans. Why do they not

[334] The interview was conducted on February 5, 2002.

identify themselves as people of Ternate where the centre of government is located? The shift in identity relates to the fact that during the violence in 1999 - 2000 there was no political or security protection from the regional government in Ternate. On the other hand, they do not call themselves Minahasans (North Sulawesi). When someone identifies himself as a Minahasan he intends to stay and to work in the region. As a consequence of the refugees' inability to compete in the Minahasa labour market, they do not identify themselves as Minahasans.

Identity, as verbally expressed by the people from Halmahera, is rooted in their material context and expressed in their political struggles. Three elements can be seen in this. First, identity relates to the struggles to return to their original home. Second, their rights as Halmaherans is linked to the land that was inherited from their ancestors on the island of Halmahera and not in Ternate and Tidore. Third, land is the place where they can actualise their potential.[335]

The refugees who fled to Ternate also made claims of political identity. The evidence for this claim can be seen in how the Muslim refugees in Ternate chose to identify themselves as people from Galela, Loloda, and Tobelo rather than more generally as Halmaherans. This identity relates to the fact that during the period of conflict the jihad troops were organized at the district level and for the Muslims that became their identity in North Moluccas during the violence.

Among the Muslim refugees, the claim of identity according to ethnicity took on a new meaning after the violence, when they returned to their home villages. Identity based on ethnicity and being indigenous to a particular district gave them leverage to face claims against the land that was left behind by Christians. Indigenous Galelans protected their neighbours' lands against illegal claims made by people from outside village. In Galela, the participants in the violence came from the regional and national Islamic Jihad. After the Christians were expelled from Galela, Islamic Jihad members from other islands attempted to seize the Christians' lands. However, Muslim Galelans rejected this effort because they believed they had to protect the land of their Christian neighbours or families.[336]

The Christians who did not flee from Halmahera also expressed their identity as Halmaherans. This usage can be found among the people in Tobelo. They created a Team for the Defence of Halmahera Society (*Tim Ketahanan Masyarakat Halmahera* = TKMH) in January 2000, after the outbreak of violence on December 27, 1999.[337] The TKMH intended to replace the District leadership after the former Head of the District, the *Camat*, left his office during the violence in 1999-2000. This team was a consultative one and its members came from various layers of society, which represented religions, tradition (*adat*) and other

[335] This research did not include the impact of the religious conflict in Ambon. There was a different process of identification among the refugees from North Moluccas than there was for the refugees from Ambon and its neighbouring islands. Unfortunately that is beyond the scope of this book.
[336] See Telegraf (August 21, 2000). This news was reconfirmed on February 10, 2002 on my trip back to Galela, .
[337] The interview was conducted on February 2, 2002.

social organisations. Their use of the name Halmahera, rather than Tobelo, shows they claimed to be part of a unity made up of the indigenous people of the island. Identification as Halmaherans gave meaning to the process of reconciliation. The Tobelo Christians believed that they must attempt to bring back both Muslim and Christian refugees to Halmahera. This attempt had to be conducted from the island itself. Therefore, in April 2001, after the violence had ceased, Christians and Muslim together created a new body named the Organisation for Defence of Halmahera Society (*Organisasi Ketahanan Masyarakat Halmahera*).

Paying attention to the way the people identified themselves after the violence, it can be concluded that their identity is related to both ownership of the land and the new context in which she/he wishes to remain. Some groups tried to manipulate land ownership by categorizing someone's identity by religion and appealing to the name of Allah and to religious ties of solidarity. The people who were not refugees called themselves Halmaherans as a sign of solidarity with the whole refugee population, both Muslim and Christian, that went into exile. On the other hand, the non-Muslims who remained in their original homes used ethnic identity as a means of defending their territory. Both Christians and Muslims identified themselves according to their ethnicity. This shows that they still have a strong identity based on land and rooted in local traditions.

7.2.2. *Tona ma langi*: The Meeting Point for Reconciliation

Longing for their homeland was a strong pull for the refugees to return. However, this desire could not easily be fulfilled without facing up to the violence that had taken place. The people needed to acknowledge the concrete facts of what happened, even though they might not ever agree on all the details. Everyone needed to recognize the rights of all groups to live together on Halmahera and the government needed to provide a guarantee of security. This sub section considers how the people faced up to the conflict and increased their communal confidence in law.

Recognition of the rights of the original inhabitants to return to their homes was the beginning of the reconciliation process. On October 9, 2000, several representatives of the Muslim refugees from Tobelo were accompanied by the military on a visit to the traditional leaders of Tobelo to state their desire to return to Tobelo. This news of the presence of the Muslim Tobelans was surprising for the Christian community. Some Christians found the meetings between the Muslims and the leaders of the Christian community controversial. After the meeting on October 9, 2000, meetings were held among Christians in Tobelo to generate a common perception that the Muslim Tobelans needed to return to their homes. Although the community still had strong feelings of hatred and injury, the leaders developed a plan for a meeting between the Muslim and Christian leaders of North Moluccas. With the protection of the military, these leaders met on October 11, 2000 in a historic place *tona ma langi* on the border of Tobelo and Galela in the area of the village of Mamuya.

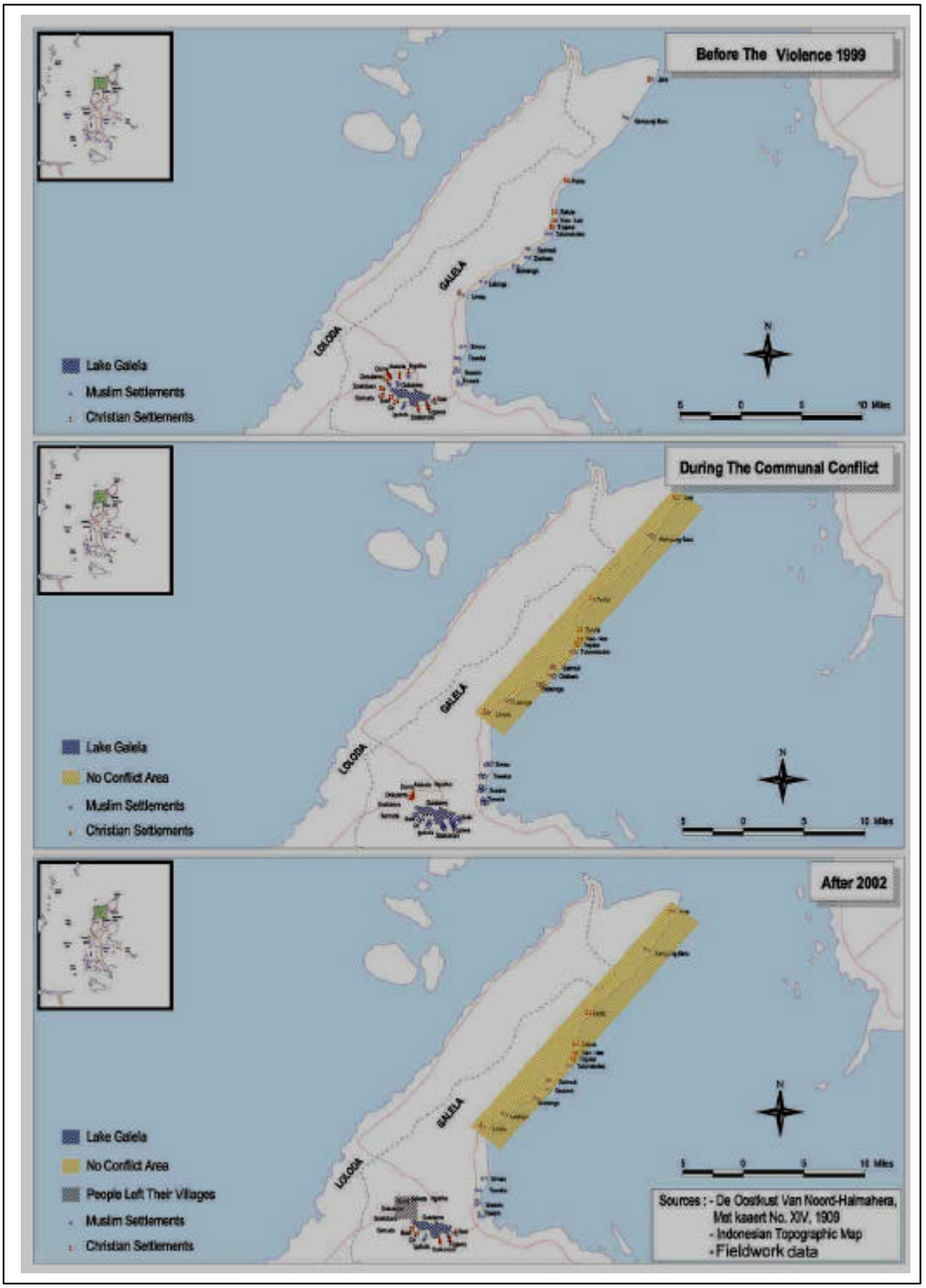
They chose Mamuya as the place for reconciliation because of their collective memories of making peace between Galela and Tobelo at Mamuya. Those Christians who were involved in the violence said that their attacks on Galela could not succeed because they were prevented from winning by their ancestral oath of *tona ma langi*. According to the Muslims who tried to attack Tobelo after they defeated the Christian majority village of Mamuya, they had great difficulties fighting after crossing the border.[338] For example, a Muslim Galelan whom I interviewed said that often they got sick when they had to cross border of *tona ma langi*. The Christians in Tobelo shared the same experience. Both Christians and Muslims shared the same convictions about the power of their ancestors' oath at this ancient site.

They began the meeting with the traditional ritual of *makan sirih dan pinang* (the chewing of betel and areca nuts). This ritual is to calm the situation before meaningful conversation takes place in the gathering.[339] The people traditionally exchange betel and areca nuts as a sign of respect and brother/sisterhood. In ritual marriage negotiations the groom's family gives betel nut to the bride's family (see Chapter III). However in the ritual of *tona ma langi*, the Christian and Muslim community leaders served each other with betel and areca nuts. Each side recognized their mutual equality as their ancestral heritage of *tona ma langi*. Before they chewed the betel and areca nuts, they together proclaimed the words *tona ma langi*.

[338] The interview was conducted on February 11, 2002.

[339] Eating *sirih pinang* actually combines three elements, betel nut, acreca nut and lime (*kapur*). Throughout Eastern Indonesia it is eaten together as a sign of mutual acceptance. Participants all eat from one plate to show that they trust one another and that there is equality among all the people who eat together. It has a mild narcotic effect that is enhanced by being combined with smoking and drinking coffee. Habitual users are easily identified by their red teeth.

Map 10: The spread of Christians and Muslims before and after the violence of 1999



According to the tradition, their ancestors shouted *tona ma langi* while driving their spears into the ground during the swearing of the oath of *tona ma langi* in the 16th Century. Historical accounts report that the Sultan of Ternate, Baab' Ulah, gave the land of Galela to the Captain (*Kapita*) of Tobelo and his people because they helped him drive out the Portuguese and their allies from the local kingdom in the Mamuya area. However at the meeting of *tona ma langi* in October 2000, betel and areca nuts replaced the spears. The spear was a sacred symbol of strength to protect the ancestral oath. In contrast, eating betel nut is a sacred symbol of brotherhood that is embedded in the everyday practices of both Muslims and Christians in North Halmahera. The people use sacred symbols to express their connection with the ancestors who are still present in their midst. At this very important moment, as they performed their ancient ancestral ritual, the people believed that the good spirits of their ancestors, *o dilike* were present. The presence of the ancestral spirits reconfirmed the sacred, material rights of the two ethnic communities of Galela and Tobelo.

Platenkamp says that symbolic exchange in the ritual system of the Galela and Tobelo people represents the meaning of the concrete situation (Platenkamp: 1988, 199). Communities may replace or change a symbol in the historical tradition without loosing its meaning in the present situation. In the past, swords or spears were symbols of the time (Hoskins: 1996). The people change their symbols as a result of a dialectic between changing material conditions and the reformulation of their ideology. Betel nut symbolizes equality, respect, brotherhood and negotiated exchange without the presence of weapons. The renewed practice of *tona ma langi* shows a shift from an oath of ethnicity to an oath of ethnicity and religion. Galela became the region of ethnic Galelans who are Muslim and Tobelo became the region of ethnic Tobelans who are Christian.

On December 24, 2000, in the presence of the Vice President of Indonesia, Megawati Sukarnoputri, the people held the second Mamuya Meeting. They chose this date because in the year 2000, Christians and Muslims celebrated their most important religious holidays at almost the same time. According to astronomical calculations, this occurs only every 35 years. December 25-26, 2000 was Christmas and December 27-28 was the Islamic celebration at the end of fasting: Idul Fitri 1412 H. December 24, 2000 as the date for the second Mamuya meeting, had both cultural and religious significance for Muslims and Christians in North Moluccas. The cultural meaning is seen in the declaration of the *tona ma langi* ancestral oath. However the cultural oath was infused with religious meaning by it's timing just before Christmas and Idul Fitri. Christmas symbolizes the coming of the peace child while Idul Fitri celebrates victory over sin and forgiveness of your neighbours. The Galelans and Tobelans reinterpreted their territorial history to become a history of reconciliation. This shows the influence of a universal ideology of peace that is embedded in both Islam and Christianity. Both groups emphasized that God forgives sin and this inspired them both to forgive each other.

A special ritual was prepared for the meeting. Two *adat* leaders represented the Muslim and Christian communities; the Muslim was from Galela and the

Christian from Tobelo. They served each other betel and areca nuts, chewing together as a sign of the opening of the meeting. Following this action, they spoke, each in their own language, on the topic of the relationship between the people of Galela and Tobelo. They delivered their speeches as though they were conversing. One began talking while the other agreed by nodding his head. They said that their ancestors were all from Lake Lina, which is located at the border of the hinterlands of Tobelo and Kao. They said that during that time, their ancestors did not embrace 'religion' such as they had now. However, they lived in peace. They questioned why after embracing universal religions, their relationships as family had broken and now contained violence. They asked all the people to be in peace and to reconcile, as this is the core spirit of their religious teachings. Then they hugged each other while reciting the ancient oath *tona ma langi*. They closed their presentation by conducting a ritual of prayer according to the Muslim and Christian traditions.

In the meeting that followed, participation was opened up so that the people could use the moment of religious celebration to forgive each other. Besides the meeting of Muslim and Christian leaders, the gathering also reunited kin and affinity networks whose members were separated into Christian or Muslim clusters. The kin and affinity groups that included family members from both Muslim and Christian sides used this important moment wisely. One eyewitness said,

> People seemed to forget their pain from the violence because of their longing to touch and to talk with their family. Hugging, and pulling each other out from the group was the scene of the moment. Each family met separately, under the banana trees, to talk and to observe. The people uttered only serious words and careful observations from each person, as if to show their determination to go beyond the disaster with resignation and repentance.[340]

The meeting left a deep impression on both Muslim and Christian families in North Moluccas. It eased the fears on both sides and the feeling and decreased the sense of each side just being victims of terror from their enemies. Allah (God), their ancestors, the government and they themselves all guaranteed the safety and legitimacy of the meeting for reconciliation. It took time and careful preparation for the meeting to take place. Why? Many people, who had lost family members because of the war, were still very fragile and traumatized. They could not easily accept a meeting for reconciliation because of their deep grief, anger and hatred. It would have been easy for them to block the process of reconciliation. Therefore the process had to be carried out carefully without confronting the wounded hearts those who had been traumatized by their experience of violence.

[340] From an interview with Permenas Budiman in February 2002, in Tobelo.

7.3. Structuring Reconciliation

Building trust through the everyday practices of people is one purpose of the reconciliation. The people negotiated reconciliation by allowing each side to share their perceptions so that peace could be initiated in several stages. A collective ritual, such as the meeting in Mamuya, had to be followed up with everyday practices that demonstrate the meaning of the negotiations for peace. This sub-section is a discussion of how the conditions for reconciliation were prepared structurally with the involvement of the central government. It closes with a story from my return to Ngidiho in 2002.

7.3.1. Constructing Commitments

Regional, national and even international groups supported initiatives to create a lasting peace. The central government in Jakarta played a very important role in facilitating reconciliation in the North Moluccas. Through the initiative of the British Council, the centre government facilitated a meeting on April 1-3, 2000, between Christian and Muslim leaders from North Moluccas in Manado, North Sulawesi. It was a meeting reaffirm their brotherhood. This meeting was arranged by members of the provincial parliament (DPRD) who were Christian refugees in Manado.[341] One of the members of the provincial parliament is also the Vice Head of the Synod of the GMIH. The *Kapita* (Captain or *Adat War Leader*) of Tobelo also attended the meeting.[342] Among the Muslim leaders who attended were the Vice Head of the provincial parliament in North Moluccas and several officials from the local government of North Moluccas (*Pemda Maluku Utara*).

Following the Manado meeting there was a meeting in Jakarta in September 2002, sponsored by the Interior Ministry of Indonesia. In the Jakarta meeting Christian and Muslim leaders discussed with government officials who should take the initiative to solve the conflict. They all agreed that reconciliation had to be initiated by the community itself. The government should support the process by improving those conditions that were sources of the conflict, related to regional autonomy and territorial development. The participants included Christian leaders from GMIH and governmental officials, including both Christians and Muslims.

Christians from Tobelo initiated a follow-up meeting on October 7, 2000, called the meeting of Gosoma, since it was held in the village of Gosoma. A leader from the Team for the Defence of Halmahera Society (*Tim Ketahanan Masyarakat Halmahera*=TKMH) organized the meeting to address the complaints of a prominent Muslim family. Some people who had kin-ties with the family of Lobiua and claimed to be part of the kin-network of the Sultan Paku Alam of Solo. These people did not agree with the efforts for reconciliation so they left the

[341] The four Christian officials of the Provincial Parliament (DPRD) were living as refugees in North Sulawesi. This interview was in August, 2000, in Manado, with Rev. Pai.

[342] The Captain *(Kapita)* of Tobelo was commissioned at the beginning of the conflict to lead the Christian troops. The Kapita was Benni Doro, but his commission as Kapita was not according to the legal authority of the Sultan of Ternate.

room during the Gosoma meeting. However, the majority of the community did not believe their claims and this spread to the wider community. Many people believed that the rise of the Lobiua family was related to a new political faction that intended to divide the unity of the society in Tobelo. The leader of the Lobiua family organization had earlier been the head of the Attorney General's office in Ternate. This family protested after GMIH received responsibility for managing aid supplies for Christian refugees in Tobelo.[343] It was reported that the Lobiua family managed aid packages from the government of North Moluccas that were intended for distribution to the Christian refugees in Tobelo. Apparently the Lobiua family wanted to centralize management of aid distribution under their control. However, the TKMH opposed their plans. Several leaders of the TKMH were influential because they had worked at various state institutions in Ternate.[344] One of them had even been in the Regency level parliament (DPRD) from the Golkar party.

The fruit of the meeting was to build a dialog with Muslim families and neighbours. On October 3, 2000 there was a meeting of Tobelo Muslims in Ternate. They agreed to communicate to the Christians in Tobelo the desire of Muslim refugees in Ternate to return to their homes. Muslim representatives brought this news to Tobelo, on October 9, 2000. This communication became important because the *tona ma langi* meeting (the first Mamuya meeting) would be on October 11, 2000. Mamuya II followed on December 24, 2000.

Christian leaders from Tobelo and Galela and Muslim leaders from Tobelo and Galela discussed a set of principles for reconciliation at the Mamuya II meeting. They agreed to the following principles. First, reconciliation will be built through social interaction and dialogue. Second, exchange visits between Muslim and Christian communities through kin and affinity networks or neighbours will need to be repeated many times in order to diffuse tensions. Third, leaders at the village level must support this process of visiting. Fourth, the government must provide legal protection of land properties and plantations. Fifth, calling Muslims *Acang* or Christians *Obed* was prohibited. Sixth, reconciliation had to be agreed to and the process followed at the village level, especially in families.

These principles of reconciliation had to be agreed to by both Christians and Muslims and were created with an emphasis on indicators that could be directly measured by society. They avoided a dogmatic approach or an emphasis on religious principles from either party. Each side was called to respect the ritual practices of the other religion with the conviction that both Muslims and Christians are free human beings in the state of Indonesia.

Following these principles of reconciliation, the Christian community in Halmahera began slowly to approach their families and communities to unite

[343] GMIH created a Crisis Centre to take over the role that had been carried out by the Evangelical Church in North Sulawesi (GMIM) to help North Moluccan refugees in North Sulawesi (especially Manado and Bitung).

[344] The interview was carried out with one of the leaders of the Team for the Defence of Halmahera Society in Tobelo. The interview took place in February 2002 in Tobelo.

them in an agreement to receive the Muslim families and neighbours who wanted to return to Tobelo. On January 27, 2001, there was a general meeting of Christians, Halmahera Bakudapa I (Halmahera Reunion I). The motto of the meeting was *Torang samua Basaudara* (we are all brothers and sisters). The result was a declaration that the Christian community was ready to enter the reconciliation process. On April 19, 2001, in the village of Togawa in Galela there was a meeting at the village level of those from the districts of Galela and Tobelo. The agenda concerned a declaration of peace between the Christian and Muslim communities in the village. The Muslim and Christian participants formulated an agreement for reconciliation based on the general principles declared by Mamuya II.

Permenas Budiman described to me the detail of the reconciliation process.[345] Before the formulation of a treaty, each side, Christian and Muslim shared their expectations of the other side in order to live together in the village. Generally, they expected that the family relationships had to be strengthened with respect shown to the ritual practices of each side. The Muslim leaders requested the Christian leaders to explain the GMIH church activities at the level of village, district and the synod. The Muslim leaders described the role of *Badan Sara* as the local Islamic court, which guides everyday practices in the Muslim community. They also explained how Muslim rituals are conducted in Ngidiho.[346]

The discussion identified several differences in the ritual practices of Muslims and Christians in Ngidiho. A basic difference was the structure of religious leaderships in church and mosque. The GMIH Synod decides the assignment of a minister to the church in Ngidiho whereas the villagers make the appointment of a member to the *Badan Sara*. The former Village Head is now one of the members of the *Badan Sara*. Both sides agreed that in the future, the minister of the GMIH church in Ngidiho should be an indigenous Galelan so that he or she could understand the traditions of the local people.

They also agreed that only the minister of the church or a member of the *Badan Sara* in Ngidiho is permitted to deliver religious sermons. The background to this agreement was the policy of district level church leaders to arrange for the exchange of ministers within the area. Ngidiho Muslims do not exchange religious leaders with other areas because they claim to follow unique religious practices, which are different from other Muslims in Galela. The Muslim

[345] This information was re-confirmed with *Oom* Din and several Christian leaders from Ngidiho.

[346] Lee explains that mosques in the villages in the Moluccas function to serve political activities as well as religious ones (Lee: 1999). However, the function of the mosque in Ngidiho was for religious activities only. The role of *the Badan Sara* is to administer Islamic law in the Muslim community. The village administration is the responsibility of the village head. Sometime the Village Head delivered speeches about the behaviour of young people who had become a problem to the community at large. During my stay in Ngidiho, the police officers in the district of Galela several times had to settle conflicts between young people from Ngidiho and labourers from the Banana Company. The Village Head used his house for his office and for general meetings of governmental institutions such as the Village Assembly (*Lembaga Musyawarah Desa=LMD*), and the Institution for the Defence of Village Society (*Lembaga Ketahanan Masyarakat Desa=LKMD*).

community in Ngidiho claims that they are *Salafiyyah* (*jemaah Salafiyyah*), which means that their ritual follows the tradition brought by the early *imams* (Muslim missionaries) when they spread Islam to the people in the 1950s.

They also discussed the lack of closeness in relationships between Muslims and Christians in Ngidiho. According to the Muslims, the problem lay with the domestication of pigs and dogs in the village. Ecological changes in Ngidiho and its neighbouring village resulted in a lack of wild pigs that could be hunted by the Christians. Therefore, Christians raise pigs in their back yards. However, their pigs and dogs often wandered freely. The Muslims frankly shared their expectation that, while Christians may still hunt for wild pigs, they would no longer be permitted to allow pigs or dogs to wander freely in the village. The Christians agreed.

Both sides also agreed that the Muslim practice of delivering sermons openly by using a loudspeaker would also be followed during the Sunday services in the church. If both Christians and Muslims could listen directly each other's sermons delivered in the mosque and church, this would reduce suspicions that religious rituals were used to sharpen the conflict that led to violence. When I first stayed in Ngidiho, *Oom* Din argued that the assumption that a place of worship is only for the followers of that particular religion had to change and be reinterpreted. Religious messages are assumed to be sacred and are accepted by the faithful. But religious messages influenced the disintegration of society. As a result, he felt that religious messages had to be controlled. Of course this raised the question of whether the "border" between the different religious groups might become permeable. If they controlled religious messages by listening to each other's sermons, some members might be lured to change religions. Be that as it may, perhaps this moment offered a good chance to build dialogue about the different practices, rituals and beliefs of Muslims and Christians living together in Ngidiho.

Both sides agreed that guests from outside Ngidiho were not allowed to stay in the village. Only those who had family ties with a villager would be allowed to stay in Ngidiho. Moreover, Christians would be required to formally notify the Heads of the District in Tobelo and Galela if they wanted to bring Christian guests back to the village. At the time of my visit, the Ngidiho Christians had not yet returned to their home, so family or neighbours who were Muslim cared for their land and plantations. The Muslims would return their property when the Christians actually returned to Ngidiho. This agreement encouraged Christians to approach those who had been taking care of their property.

The follow-up of the meeting on April 19, 2001 can be seen directly in the process refugees returning to both Tobelo and Galela. This resettlement became a model for the return of refugees in other conflict areas in North Moluccas. On April 23, 2001, Tobelo Christians received Muslim refugees who were from the villages of Gorua, Tolonua, Mede, Luari and others. The acceptance of the Muslims in Tobelo followed an agreement not to receive back those who had provoked the riots between Christians and Muslim in December 1999 in Tobelo. There are

several Muslims from Tobelo who are still not permitted to stay in Tobelo because they are suspected of having enflamed the conflict prior to the violence. However the interpretation of this agreement depends on the development of the political situation at the district and village levels.

The Muslim refugees from Tobelo returned after the Heads of their villages came to pick them up in Ternate. The Tobelo Christians welcomed the Muslims with a special ceremony at the harbour conducted by the Head of District (*Camat*). Christians from each village waited for their neighbours and families. They sang traditional songs and held a communal meal in the meeting hall of the district office. This welcoming ritual was also used to welcome back refugees in other districts such as Jailolo, Morotai Utara, Gane, Sahu, and Loloda where the process of resettlement of refugees was still ongoing when I visited in February, 2002.

The local government supported the communities in helping their returning neighbours and families to rebuild their houses. The people constructed new houses together. While waiting for aid from the government, they built temporary houses from bamboo because bamboo was easily available in the forest. The local government worked closely with international aid agencies to provide basic needs for the refugees. USAID distributed material aid such as cement, zinc roofing, nails etc., for the refugees to rebuild their houses.

The return of Muslims to Tobelo opened the way for the Christians of Galela to also return home. In February 2002, the villages which accepted the return of Christian refugees included Mamuya, Pune, Seki, Togawa, Samuda, and Bale. Christians from Ngidiho, Duma, Soatobaru, Makete and other villages were still preparing for their return. At this time the public market and the stores in Galele were only open for limited hours and only sold nine types of necessities. Soon after the reconciliation began, Ngidiho Muslims came to Tobelo to sell their harvest and to buy their basic needs. People started to sell copra directly to Tobelo despite the fact that there were several collectors in Galela. People from Galela also came to Tobelo to search for the things they could not find in Galela.

7.3.2. Kin-Ties as the Entrance

In February 2002 I revisited the region after having lost contact with most of my Muslim and Christian friends because of the violence. I stayed for a few days with a Makian, Muslim family in Ternate before crossing to the island of Halmahera. This made a deep impression on me because the process of reconciliation had proceeded much more quickly in North Moluccas than in Ambon, Poso or other places of violent conflict in Indonesia. With the help of a mediator, the pattern of relationships between Christians and Muslims in North Moluccas had become much more direct and open. Relationships between individuals within kinship and affinity groups were the principle means of reconciliation. Traditional practices of negotiation and exchange, as well as assistance from the local government fostered the remarkable progress of reconciliation in the area.

Setting aside the misgivings of my advisors and friends, I left Amsterdam with a deep longing to visit my household in Ngidiho. When I had arrived in Ternate, I did not know if it would be possible to visit my household in Ngidiho. On February 5, 2002, I left for the island of Halmahera on a speedboat from Ternate to Sidangoli. The regular ferry was out of operation. At the bus station in Sidangoli, I decided to buy a ticket that would take me all the way to Galela even though I planned to get off in Tobelo, before the bus entered Galela. We left Sidangoli at 9.30 am and began to enter the district of Tobelo at 13.30 pm.

I decided to take the bus that was bound for Galela so that I could learn about the situation in Galela by talking with the other passengers. They were all from Galela and Tobelo. In the bus, I reached the conclusion that I should first visit the second cousin and family of *Oom* Din's wife who were Christian refugees from Galela, now staying in Tobelo. *Oom* Din and his family had been refugees in Ternate, however in September 2000 they retuned to Ngidiho.[347] I shared my plan with a young Muslim man, Faisal Sekolah, who sat beside me in the bus. "Before I go to Ngidiho to meet *Oom* Din and his family, I am going to visit Permenas Budiman who is now in Tobelo". The name of Permenas Budiman was familiar to him. "I can show where he works. He works at the second of the stores selling motorbikes", the man explained.

When the bus entered Tobelo, Faisal watched carefully for the store where Permenas worked. However the store was closed. The bus was travelling quickly, but suddenly he shouted loudly the name of Permenas. The bus stopped. Then the driver turned the bus around to go back in the direction where Faisal had seen Permenas. He was sitting at the front of a store about 30 meter away from the store identified by Faisal.

Permenas approached the bus because our hands waved at him. "*Ibu*", he exclaimed in surprise when he realized I was in the bus. "I want to go to Ngidiho but I would like to stop at your house," I explained to him. "*Ibu*, please get out". When this 45-year-old man invited me to exit the bus, I said goodbye to all the passengers. From the bus I heard a voice explaining: "Permenas is the youngest brother and is Christian but Suab, the elder brother is Muslim and lives in Ngidiho, Galela." It was the voice of *Pak* Hajj Syarif who was in the bus that I had taken from Sidangoli to Tobelo.[348]

My arrival in Tobelo was a surprise to Permenas Budiman's family. Chapter VI described the wedding party of Permenas's son that was disturbed by the spread of a rumour that riots had broken out in Tobelo in November 1999. Before the 1999-2000 violence, Permenas was a successful businessman. However, after the violence, he and his family were refugees. He and his family fled from Galela

[347] The violence between Muslims and Christians stopped after the village of Duma was destroyed. Duma was widely regarded as the original centre of Christianity in Halmahera. It collapsed after repeated assaults, in May, 2000.

[348] In Chapter VI, I mentioned the two leaders of Galela who rode around the village on a motorbike, to calm the panic, when rumours were flying about the outbreak of violence in Tobelo. These two older men were *Oom* Nani who is Christian and *Oom* Syarif who is Muslim.

after December 27, 1999 but later returned. They stayed in a bamboo walled house that was abandoned by a family who had returned to Sanger in North Sulawesi. The assumption of the young man on the bus, that Permenas worked at the second automobile store was incorrect. Actually his 19-year-old son, Mimi, worked at the store. Permenas's self-image as a successful businessman, formed before the violence, made it difficult for him to work as a labourer in the harbour or as a driver of an *ojek* (motorcycle taxi) as many of the Christian refugee men in Tobelo were doing. Permenas decided just to help his son selling and buying motorbikes.

On the afternoon of my arrival, Permenas sent a message to *Oom* Din in Ngidiho that he would like him to come to Tobelo the next day. "We are thankful that *Ibu* came here first to visit us", Permenas said to me. I remembered again the time when I had been welcomed by the Village Head in Ngidiho and invited to stay with *Oom* Din and his family before the violence. Now the situation was more complex. Permenas and his wife explained to me:

> Now Christians and Muslims are visiting one another. We go to Ngidiho and they visit us in Tobelo. *Oom* Din has stopped at our house a few times. If we go to Ngidiho, sister Iana (the wife of *Oom* Din) calls us to have a cup of tea at her house. Although we all are poor now, as a family it is more important to show our presence, according to the Galela expression, *teke si doohawa*. Sometime, my brother Suab, who became a hajji in February 2002, brings us fish. If we can, when we go to Ngidiho we take rice from Tobelo.

I was reminded of how the practice of exchanging of food (*hike de dota*) had always been a way to tighten relationships between Muslims and Christians, especially those who are from the same family. Permenas explained that I could not just go directly to Ngidiho, "Because *Ibu* is not a resident of Ngidiho, you must first wait to meet *Oom* Din here, before arranging a visit to Ngidiho. Permenas then explained to me about the reconciliation agreement between the Muslim and Christian communities. One of the agreements was to restrict anyone who is not indigenous to the village from staying there. "I understand. If it is God's will, I will be able to meet *Oom* Din tomorrow", I replied to them.

My meeting with *Oom* Din was very touching. He said, "God permitted us to be tempted so that the violence occurred. Disaster happened to us because we were all possessed by an evil spirit." He watched me very closely. "*Alhamdulillah*, we all became aware that there was nothing to be gained by violence. Now we are ready to accept back the Ngidiho Christians in our village. When they have returned, with the permission of God, *Ibu* can stay with us in Ngidiho. But for now, it is better to stay with Permenas and his family. They are also my family." *Oom* Din reassured me.

Oom Din then told me the story of his neighbour, *Pak* Hajj Tari who lost his son during the violence. Hajj Tari was still not yet able to meet Christians, due to his grief over the loss of his son. *Oom* Din was afraid that my presence in Ngidiho might open up traumatic feelings in the family. Then *Oom* Din reminded me of the accusations made about him and the Head of the village. He was a refugee in Ternate at the time when the Laskar Jihad Ternate (the Islamic Troops from Ternate) had condemned him and the Head of Village for having me at his house in Ngidiho where I was doing my fieldwork. Fortunately, all the documents of my research could be found in the city hall of the government office (*Kantor Daerah*) in Ternate. The documents described the permission I received from the central government in Jakarta, from the Province, the District and the village to do my research. My research at that time was on the impact of agricultural globalisation on social change, since I did not yet know I was studying ritual and violence. Fortunately they were able to find my academic research permits and the prosecutors freed *Oom* Din and the Village Head of Ngidiho. I heard the same story from *Pak* Amran, my close Muslim colleague in Ternate.

In Chapter I, I described the meeting between *Oom* Din and *Pak* Amran when we were in Ternate before my departure to Jawa at the end of November 1999. *Oom* Din had accompanied me from Ngidiho to Ternate along with all the Village Heads from the District of Galela, right after all Christians were expelled from Ternate. After *Oom* Din and his family fled to Ternate in January 2000, I telephoned *Pak* Amran to ask him to search for *Oom* Din. *Pak* Amran found *Oom* Din in the refugee camps where he was on trial, trying to defend himself against accusations that he was a *provocateur* because he had housed a Christian spy before the outbreak of war. *Pak* Amran provided confirmation that I was in North Moluccas to do research for my Ph.D. studies at the University in Amsterdam. Together they found the government documentation that released *Oom* Din and the Village Head from charges.

In reunion meeting with *Oom* Din, I again apologized for what had happened to him. I also made it clear that I understood why he could not invite me immediately to stay in his house. I respected him very much. He left for home taking my love and longing to see the whole family and promised to bring his wife to meet me in Tobelo.

On Sunday, February 10, 2002, I again met *Oom* Din at the house of Permenas. He came with *Mama* Iana and their three grandchildren, Imam, Dila and Umar. For mother Iana, this was her first trip to Tobelo, even though *Oom* Din had already gone back and forth several times between Galela and Tobelo. The meeting was a touching reunion for me. I could see regret in their faces that afternoon. "Disaster happened to us", *Oom* Din said. That same afternoon, *Oom* Din and *mama* Iana agreed that we could accompany them to visit their home in Ngidiho. I am thankful for their trust, which allowed me to be with them on their return to Ngidiho. I rented a van and with the family of Permenas Budiman, *Oom* David Tunepe, one of the *adat* leaders of Ngidiho, and his wife, we all went to Ngidiho along with *Oom* Din and his family.

Arriving in Ngidiho, I was welcomed with tears by the family of *Oom* Din. After hearing that I was at *Oom* Din's house, the Head of the Village, his wife and several leaders of Ngidiho visited me. Several married women with whom I had talked about their everyday life came to see me. I used the moment to ask for their forgiveness for what had happened to the Head of the Village and *Oom* Din during the time when they had been prosecuted as provocateurs by the Laskar Jihad Ternate. We were all touched by the moment. Many times I heard them say, "It was a disaster." The Head of the village reminded me of the donation I had made for them before their trip to Mecca in February 2000. "We were six people who were going to Mecca but we had nothing. *Alhamdulillah*, the cash *Ibu* sent could help us." While smiling, his wife only nodded her head. They are now *Hajj* and *Hajjah*.

We were all gripped, bowed and broken hearted. As though in a trance, I felt like I was transported back to the time when I lived in Ngidiho a few years ago, before the violence occurred. However, the voice of grandmother Yap, the stepmother of *Oom* Din returned me to their presence. "We all had to begin our lives from zero!" she said while hugging me closely. They were thankful that I had already left for Java just before the war broke out, even though they knew that I had not planned to leave Ngidiho so early.

We all laughed when mother Iana made a joke about their suffering in Ternate. She said that they suffered as refugees because they could not just pick their own food from their own garden as they did in Ngidiho. Repeatedly shaking her head, she said a stem of bananas cost Rp. 10,000 there, whereas before the violence, she sold bananas at the public market in Soa Sio, Galela for only Rp. 3,000 or ate them free from her garden. Sometimes, they compared their past suffering with their present condition or with the period before the violence occurred. Many times the women repeated the word "repent" (*bertobat*). When I asked what they meant by saying the word "repent," they explained that they wished they had repented so that God would have saved them from the trance of Satan into which human beings fall. The evil of the riots created nothing but suffering for society.

Before *maghrib* (sunset prayer), we departed for Tobelo. Our van was full with four stems of bananas given by *Oom* Din for his relatives who visited him in Ngidiho. While I stayed in Tobelo, several time I received visits from the members of the Budiman family and others who heard that I was at Permenas's house. I am thankful that I was accepted as a member of their family. I also received visits from the Ngidiho Christians who were still refugees in Tobelo.

7.4. A Politics of Honesty for Empowering Society.

Violence sacrifices ordinary people, the grass roots of the society. However, it seems that such people easily forget the violence that happened to them. The word "disaster" contains a particular construction of the meaning of an event. In the context of the violence in Halmahera, "disaster" includes regret and grief. The violence was a disaster for everyone. This recognition can strengthen the rebuilding of broken lives that were damaged by violence. Violence is organized

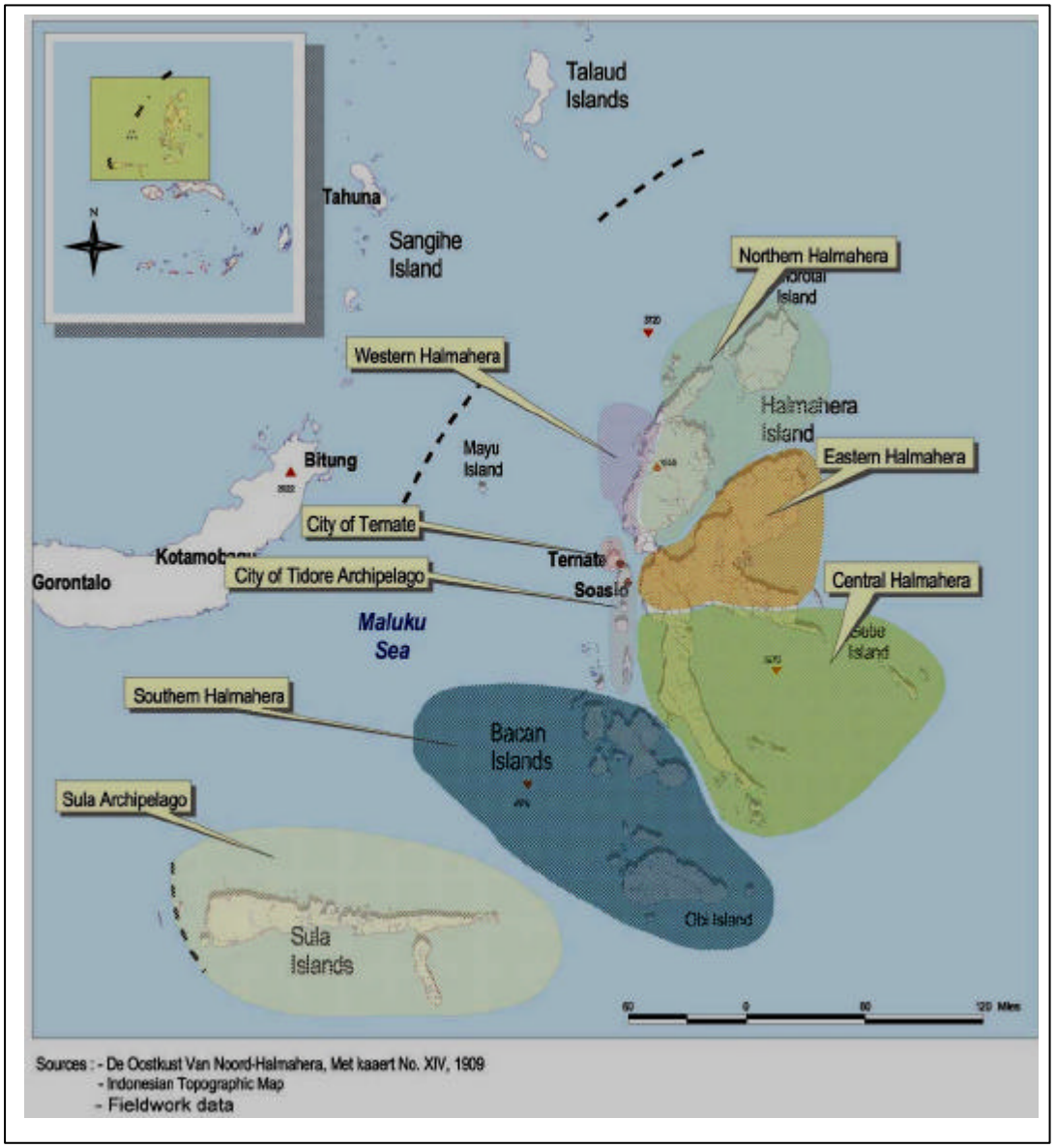
actions or intentional behaviour that harms the body and the soul. Awareness of the disastrous character of violence creates a strong motivation in society to renew the structures of human society that collapsed during the war. A peace agreement has to be made with due consideration for the aspirations of the various groups in a fair process of negotiation. The communities that seek peace need to be supported by powerful structures of society such as government bureaucracies, the military and religious institutions. These structures and support or undermine a politics of honesty that must undergird the reconciliation process. In this sub section, I will describe the challenge of addressing the material and political roots of the conflict that are related to regional policies and economic development.

7.4.1. Territorial Naming by the Government

In keeping with the development plans of the Government of Indonesia, North Moluccas became a separate province and the Districts became Regencies in the new province. Before the violence, the government of North Moluccas planned to raise the status of the regions in northern Halmahera, southern Halmahera and the archipelago of Sula. In this plan, the regency areas of Northern Halmahera that were scheduled for development included Morotai, Galela, Tobelo, Kao, Jailolo, Sahu and Northern Loloda. Regions that were included in the Southern Halmahera regency were Weda, Gane, pulau Obi and the archipelago of Bacan. The development of the district of the Sula archipelago to a regency contains the islands of Taliabu, Sanana and Mangoli.[349]

[349] This information comes from my interview with the former head *of Badan Perencanana Daerah (Bapeda) Tingkat I Propinsi* Maluku Utara. Bapeda is the Regional Planning Institution at the Provincial level. However during my visit in March 2004, I discovered that the plan I discussed above had already stabilized into a regulation, UU No I tahun 2003 that announced the extention of regencies in North Moluccas. The new regencies include Northern Halmahera with Tobelo as the capital and Southern Halmahera with Batjan as the capital. Sanana is the capital of the Regency of the Sula archipelago, while Western Halmahera was transfered from the old Regency of North Moluccas and became its own regency with Jailolo as the capital. The Regency of Center Halmahera expanded to become three regencies: the Regency of Eastern Halmahera with the capital in Buli, the Regency of Center Halmahera with the capital in Weda and City of Tidore archipelago.

Map 11: Government Plans for Regency Territories



However, after the 1999-2000 violence, the government of North Moluccas made a new plan for regional development. This plan designated regencies for Northern Halmahera, Western Halmahera and the Autonomous Region of Morotai (*daerah otorita Morotai*). The regency of Northern Halmahera includes both Galela and Tobelo. The Autonomous Region of Morotai is considered to be independent and not part of any regency. The regency of Western Halmahera includes Jailolo, Sahu, Ibu and Southern Loloda. However, the government of the North Moluccas gave a special opportunity for the Makian communities in Malifut and Kao to choose which regency they wished to join.

The communities in North Moluccas questioned the plan for the regional development of northern Halmahera, which would divide western Halmahera

from northern Halmahera. Although the idea of the regional development of western Halmahera had already been discussed in 1964 by the Regency Planning Institution (*Bapeda Tingkat II*), the people questioned why changes had only occurred in the regional plan for northern Halmahera. No changes were made to the plan for the regional development of the regency of Southern Halmahera or the archipelago of Sula.

According to the geographer H. Manetemo,[350] Western Halmahera was divided more on political grounds than as an application of the principle of regional distribution or justice as the core of regional development. The idea of designating western Halmahera as a regency of the Province of North Moluccas is confusing. The use of 'western Halmahera' makes no sense because it does not agree with regional divisions as they have been formulated. The term 'western Halmahera' designates a administrative region on the west side of the island of Halmahera. However, on the west side of the island, there are already two developed areas, namely the municipalities of Ternate and Tidore. Ternate is the capital of the existing Regency of North Moluccas that includes the whole area of northern Halmahera down to the middle and includes both the western and eastern sides of the island. Soa Sio on the island of Tidore is the capital of the Regency of the Centre Halmahera, which includes the whole area starting from the middle down to the southern part also including the western and eastern sides of Halmahera Island.

The regional developmental plan after the violence included a double function for Jailolo, which would be the capital of the Regency of North Moluccas and the Regency of Western Halmahera. The Regency of the North Moluccas is the old structure that still remains in place after its status had been raised to that of the Province of North Moluccas. The Regency of North Moluccas was created when North Moluccas was part of the provincial government of the Moluccas cantered in Ambon. According to Manetemo, efforts to keep the Regency of North Moluccas will mean inefficiencies. The old structure should be re-evaluated and the bureaucrats distributed to other regions in the province.

The proposal by the government of North Moluccas to create the Regency of Western Halmahera used a term already seen in the 1964 plan. This term has some cultural meaning for the territory.[351] However, it seems to be in opposition to another plan of the government of North Moluccas to create stability in the District of Malifut within the District of Kao. It also seems to contradict the map of social mobility of all the ethnic groups in the north Moluccas. For example the Makian people live everywhere in southern and northern Halmahera. Relations between communities that speak the same language can become a motivation for people to move to an area where the people share the same ethnic origins. The distribution of languages includes the Makian languages in the island of Makian, Bacan and Kayoa, which is located on the western coast of Halmahera. The linguistic clusters of Sahu are spread in the districts of Jailolo and Sahu on the western coast of Northern Halmahera. The linguistic clusters of Galela/Loloda are

[350] The interview was conducted on February 7, 2002.
[351] See (Djahir: 1964, 20).

found in Galela, Loloda and Southern Morotai. The linguistic cluster of Tobelo/Tobaru/Modele are in Kao, Tobelo, and Northern Morotai (Voorhoeve: 1988, 181-209; Platenkamp: 1988, 6).

On February 8, 2002 in the district of Kao there was a meeting between the government of North Moluccas and the leaders from Kao and Makian-Malifut. The government called this meeting to discuss the plan for the regional development of Western Halmahera and Northern Halmahera. The planned border between Western Halmahera and Northern Halmahera would be at Kao. Therefore the government wanted the Kao people to choose which regency they wished to join. However, government had still not settled the Kao people's disagreement with governmental regulation (PP142/1999) that created the district of Malifut Makian Daratan. The government stated that the name of the District of Malifut Makian Daratan would be changed to become the District of Malifut. However the Kao community still questioned the nature and status of the regional regulation, which detailed the regional development of Makian Daratan and Kao.

According to the Kaos, the development of the District of Malifut within the territory of the District of Kao was not legal because there was no new government regulation establishing it. The regulation being applied was number 142, 1999 that had caused the outbreak of conflict. Even the government's change of the name of the District of Makian to Malifut, was considered illegal. At this meeting, the Kao people proposed the assimilation of the Makian people within the District of Kao and that they should postpone regional development plans until later when they could be centred in the District of Kao. The idea of assimilation was taken from the model of Javanese transmigration, which integrated the Javanese into Kao society in the villages of Toliwang and Biang. However, the government referred to the fact that Makian people had been present in the Kao territory since 1975 and it rejected this proposal. The result was that the District of Makian would have the right to develop into the Regency of Malifut.[352] The government supported their position with a formal planning report that showed the border between the District of Malifut Makian Daratan and the District of Kao, Jailolo, and Sahu.[353]

Considering the confusion in the regulations to move the District of Makian from the island of Makian to the District of Kao, this disagreement underlines the differences in assumptions underlying the principles of regional development. Sometimes the plan for regional development did not show a balanced perspective concerning the physical division of the region and the importance of cultural territory that is inherent in the society's tradition. The Kao used the principle of cultural territory in choosing to join the region in which Tobelo is the centre. Not only are there cultural connections between Kao and Tobelo, but also the Kao territory is much closer to Tobelo than to Jailolo.

[352] In my 2004 visit, I found out that both the Districts of Kao and of Malifut Makian Daratan were finally joined to the Regency of North Halmahera with Tobelo as the capital. One reason for this decision was that their location is geographically close to Tobelo.
[353] See Informasi Kecamatan: 1993, 45

7.4.2. A Common History after the Conflicts

Before the 1999-2000 violence, PT GAI, the Banana Company, which operated in Galela to export bananas to several Asian countries, hired about 4,635 labourers. People came from every region in North Moluccas as well as from outside the region as far as Java. After the conflict the company no longer operated. This expensive investment in eastern Indonesia had been lost for nothing. The Company created an economic infrastructure of work for the common people, such as labour in the harbour, on the banana plantation and in small businesses, which had grown like mushrooms in the rainy season. Now they had already disappeared.

After the violence, people began realize that in order to rebuild their region, they needed each other. The people of Tobelo needed the people of Galela and vice versa. This awareness became stronger after the people in Tobelo and Galela realized that the government of North Moluccas only gave attention to the refugees so that corrupt elite bureaucrats could make use of the aid funds that were earmarked for refugees.[354] Awareness of corruption in the government caused people to focus and strengthen their struggle against the plan for regional development that included new territory divisions that did not respect their collective identity.

On February 1, 2002 in Tobelo there was a meeting attended by representatives from Kao, Jailolo, Tobelo, Galela, Morotai and Loloda. They declared together that it was urgent to create the Regency of Northern Halmahera. Before they announced the declaration they opened the assembly with a performance of the Cakalele dance. Two pairs of dancers from Tobelo and Galela performed in a crisscrossed pattern. In the first pair, the male dancer (*o soda*) was from Galela partnered with a female dancer (*o sisi*) from Tobelo. The second pair was a male dancer from Tobelo and a female dancer from Galela. The dance began with the performance of two female dancers who danced while holding pieces of cloth. The two male dancers entered the arena choosing their partners from the other district. Then the two male dancers kneeled in front of the two female dancers who opened their cloths and each unwrapped a wooden sword and shield. Each woman gave a sword and shield to their dance partner. The drums beat incessantly and the screaming voices of the people filled the air.

The *Cakalele* dance is a symbol of courage. The people of Ngidiho believe that when they dance the *Cakalele*, the presence of the good ancestral spirits are united with the dancers. Whoever dances the *Cakalele* enters into the joyfulness of the celebration to welcome their ancestors who had returned from a long voyage as sea pirates. In the marriage ceremony, the father of the groom acts as the male dancer (*o soda*) who dances with the sister of the bride (*o sisi*). After they have danced, the shield, sword and spear are given to the bride's family (cf. Platenkamp: 1988). There are two purposes for giving the weapons to the bride's family. First, they are quite valuable as gifts. Second, by giving these weapons,

[354] See Kompas (December 28, 2001).

the mother of the bride can purify them by cleaning them with her cloths and then covering them with her cloths. This purification ceremony cuts the web of violence and revenge inherited from sea-pirates, which threatens her family. According to tradition, these weapons are thirsty for the blood of human beings and might cause trouble if not dealt with wisely.

The *Cakalele* dance performed in the ritual at the declaration of support for the creation of a North Halmahera Regency in February 2002 is a fascinating innovation. The two pairs of male and female dancers performed a union between the ethnic groups of Galela and Tobelo. The exchange and purification of the weapons was to extinguish their desire to kill each other. Perhaps it also suggested a union to fight together against their common enemies. This ritual at least shows that they must both, Galela and Tobelo, struggle together to escape from the disaster of war and recreate their common welfare. The two ethnic groups were beginning to mix at this meeting. The leader of the Galela Muslims, who was head of a political party and a member of the provincial parliament, attended this meeting, which declared their support for the establishment of a Regency of North Halmahera with its capital in Tobelo.

The success of this meeting illustrates the process of reconciliation and the reuniting of the people of Tobelo and Galela. The history of Galela and Tobelo suggests that these two ethnic groups reinvented themselves by migrating throughout the North Moluccas. Evidence for the large impact of their migrations can be seen in the influence of their language on the other languages of the region. Therefore, according to the people of Tobelo and Galela, the declaration of a Regency of the North Moluccas inspires reconciliation and the creation of coalitions within the society of the North Moluccas.

7.4.3. The Election of the Governor

The reunification of Tobelo and Galela inspired other regions, such as the archipelago of Sula and Southern Halmahera, to struggle for the legitimacy of the other regional governments. The need for justice and fair distribution was a reason for speeding up the process of legitimacy. The people also wished to speed up the installation of a new system because the election of the Governor on July 25, 2001, had left a vacuum. Abdul Gafur and Yamin Tawari represented the *Golongan Karya* (Golkar) Party and won the DPRD election with 24 votes; Thayeb Armaen and Yamin Wa Saleh, from the Party of Reformation, won 20 votes. However, the Reformation Party claimed that the winners used 'money politics', so the government did not declare the result of the election for almost a year. The controversy about money politics in the Governor's election in North Moluccas created confusion. Surprisingly, one member of the provincial parliament from Abdul Gafur's group (Golkar) signed a declaration admitting that he received money in exchange for his vote. Later he withdrew his confession/accusation.[355]

[355] See Kompas (January 15, 2002).

The Golkar Party chose to pursue this case to the national level for a legal judgment as to whether the result of the election was proper or not. At the national level the Golkar Party won the case, but on appeal to the Supreme Court, the judges ruled that the government must hold a new election. Although Golkar was the party of Suharto's New Order, and widely despised, it still enjoyed a fair amount of legitimacy among the people of North Moluccas, especially among those who supported the Sultan of Ternate. The Sultan of Ternate was fired by the central Golkar organization because he was accused of being responsible for the riots in North Moluccas. However, many people doubted the accusations against the Sultan of Ternate and still believed that his leadership was needed to bring unity to the different ethnic and religious clusters.

Some people in North Moluccas believe the postponement of the installation of the new Governor was related to the issue of corruption in the management of refugee aid. Interim governments lack power and have difficulty stopping corruption. During the period 2000-2002 North Moluccas had a caretaker Governor, Muhyi Effendie, while Thayeb Armaen was the Secretary of the Regency of North Moluccas. In April 2002, another caretaker governor, from North Sulawesi, was appointed to provide leadership in North Moluccas. In the end the current governor, Thayeb Armaen was supported by PDI-P, along with his vice governor, Prof. Majid Abdullah, who is actually a lecturer at Sam Ratulangi University in North Sulawesi.

7.5. Maintaining the Reconciliation Process

Maintaining peace after the violence is both the responsibility of the communities involved, as well as of the government of North Moluccas. In areas free from conflict, communities and government must work together to maintain unity and trust. What can we learn from particular communities that successfully defended their unity against external pressures that encourage disintegration. The Galelans and Tobelans defended their peace by empowering their collective ritual. Collective rituals can remain powerful if the people pay attention to changes in the material context that influence the ideology that expresses the interests of the different groups that make up the community. The size of the gap between the context and the material interests, which differ according to ethnicity and religion, will determine directly the formulation of an ideology that can create a common meaning. People empower their collective rituals by making them effective vehicles for negotiation of their material interests so as to strengthen unity in the community. This mechanism directly influences their negotiation of security and ability to block intervention by outside individuals or institutions, which provoke riots.

7.5.1. Social Cohesion and the Ancestors

The conflict in North Moluccas was in part a result of the impact of change within the power constellation at the national and regional levels. The conflict was labelled a "religious conflict," but it actually shows the unity of people from

different religions. According to government statistics, of the 20 districts in the province of North Moluccas only 9 districts participated in the conflict labelled "religious".[356] The rest of the districts maintained peace between the different religious communities, in spite of provocation. Some of the districts that include a mixture of Muslims and Christians who stayed together are Ibu, Buli, Southern Morotai (Morotai Selatan), Taliabu, and Kao.

How did these communities maintain unity between Christians and Muslims in spite of provocation? Kao is a good example for explaining the process by which peace was maintained. Even though Kao was directly involved in ethnic conflict with the Makians over land and faced a concerted attempt to divide the Kao people according to their religion, the Christians and Muslims of Kao remain united right up to the time of this writing. This case shows how people are tied by collective rituals despite being followers of different religions. The Kao collective rituals are ancestral practices that they believe are binding. They must be followed if the community does not want to experience a disaster. Their collective rituals are moral actions that map the existence of each individual in the context of their togetherness as the people of Kao.

Kao is important for the study of conflict in the Moluccas because it shows how riots about borders may or may not shift into religious conflict. Because of the increase of tensions in the Moluccas at large, the government of Indonesia proclaimed a Civil Emergency in the province of North Moluccas and the province of Moluccas beginning on March 4, 2000. The term 'Civil Regional Emergency' meant that the national military (TNI), received responsibility for restoring regional civil security. The military was meant to make peace. However, the people claimed that they had to maintain security themselves. The people were already aware that the military had complicated the violence in Ambon. Therefore the people in North Moluccas who lived in conflict free areas, worked together, both Christians and Muslims to decide whether they wanted to accept military units in their villages.

For example, the people of Kao received military personnel to stop the violence in their region. However, on April 27, 2000, they organized a meeting, proposed by both Christians and Muslims, to demand that the military account for what had happened in the district of Kao that very morning, April 27, 2000. Early in the morning, the people in the village of Jati heard the sound of people running and encircling houses in the centre of the village. In a state of terror, they heard the shooting of guns, the formation of ranks and the command to attack. The people believed that this event in the early morning was a deliberate attempt to create terror and to provoke the people. However the people did not respond at the moment and all the villagers remained inside their houses.

The public meeting ended with an explanation from the government that this had been just a military training exercise. Nonetheless, the Kao people elicited an agreement from the military officials to send in a request to the Civil Emergency

[356] See Kompas (February 15, 2002).

(*Kotis*) government to change the troops who were stationed in the District of Kao. The community did not believe the current troops were neutral regarding their conflict with the Makians and they could not accept such acts of terror from military troops who were supposed to keep peace. Terror was being used in the name of one religious group to attack the other religious group with the hope that violence would break out. The *Kotis* accepted the proposal of the Kao community and replaced the troops.

The leaders of Kao said there were many intentional efforts to divide the community. There were people who wanted to create conflict between the Muslims and Christians of Kao. Fortunately, their ancestral oath and the protection of God maintained the unity of the society. "How deep is this unity among the Kao people?" I asked the leaders of Kao. In reply, one of the Muslim leaders pointed to their sacred graveyard in the village of Jati and began to tell of how their trust and unity is rooted in their ancestral history.

Both the Muslims and Christians in the community of Kao believe that their struggles are part of a single, historical, ancestral narrative. In the history of Kao, their unity has faced three great tests. The first was in 1570 when, under the leaderships of Sultan Baab'Ulah, they expelled the Portuguese from the North Moluccas. The second was in 1906 when they fought against the Netherlands because the Sangaji of Modele was taken to Ternate and then disappeared. The government arrested the Modole Sangaji because he failed to collect the tax on the local people assessed by the colonial government. De Jongh recorded that in 1909 the colonial government chose two Sangaji in the district of Kao. The first was a Muslim Sangaji for Kao Muslims located in Tololiko. The second was the Sangaji of Modole who practiced the local region (*alfuru*) (de Jongh: 1909, 757, 766). The Sangaji had to collect taxes every year with a target for the districts of Tobelo, Kao, and Morotai of Fl.13.000 (de Jongh: 1909, 762). Magany says that the people of Kao who lived along the coast became Christian in 1898 as the result of the work of the Dutch missionary, Hueting. However, the people of Modole began to become Christian in 1906 (Magany: 1984, 453, 455).

Their unity was tested a third time in June 1999, when the government of North Moluccas issued Regional Regulation, number 142, 1999 that joined five villages of Kao into the District of Malifut Makian Daratan. According to the Kao leaders, their people succeeded in facing this third great test of their unity because they shared the same common history and practice of collective ritual, which inspired the moral strength of their ancestors to face the second conflict in 1906. The struggle to bring back the Sangaji of Modole caused seven Kao to die during the war and they are still remembered as heroes. Among them, four were Christian and three were Muslim. They are buried together in one graveyard. At that time, they began the funeral ritual with the ancestral oath *Empat Sangaji Adat dalam Satu Bengawan Atap* ("Four Sangajis of Adat under a Single Great Roof"). The meaning of this oath is, first, that when one brother experiences a disaster, three others have to help and , second, if someone should betray his brothers he will face a disaster. After that, the ritual closed with prayers from both Muslims and Christians.

This oath contains the memory of a primordial ritual oath that the community all believe was the foundation of their people. According to their story, a long time ago there were four brothers named Modole, Pagu, Kao or Tololiko, and Boeng.[357] They lived together until the time came when each of them had to build his own household. Before they separated, they promised to meet again. For the next meeting, each of them had to bring something that showed his success. Then they held hands and declared an oath that if one experienced a disaster, the three others would come to help him; however, if one betrayed the others he would be punished by a disaster.

At the next meeting, Modole brought palm leaves while Pagu brought joists (*bengkawan* or *totori*) to make the frame of a roof. Kao brought loleba for sewing the roof and Boeng sewed the roof. The completed roof was a sign of their success and unity. They insisted that the oath of the roof, that signified their success and unity, had to be handed down by their offspring from generation to generation. The continuation of the oath from one generation to the next was confirmed by a ritual in which they took one of the beams of the roof (*bengkawan*) and burned it. They then collected the ashes and mixed them with vinegar from *saguer* (palm liquor). With this they added 40-50 ground hot chillies. The four brothers put this mixture into a coconut shell and passed it around for each to drink. Before they began to drink, they again swore the oath they had made before leaving their family house. Even up to today, the Sangaji of Modelo, Pagu, Kao and Boeng are considered the descents of the four brothers.

In dealing with the border conflict with the Makians, the Kao people (10% Muslim and 90% Christian) protected their unity with the help of several layers of collective ritual that were inherited from their ancestors. However, because they were now facing a new and different context, the Kao also made adjustments to their inherited collective ritual. The leaders of both the Muslims and Christians of Kao conducted same collective ritual but began from their separate religious locations. The Muslims gathered in the mosque and Christians gathered in the church, each to pray for the strength and wisdom that they would need to deal with the border conflict. After that both congregations (*umat*) went to the graveyard of the seven heroes of Kao to begin the collective ritual. In front of the graveyard of the heroes of Kao, they again swore the oath *Empat Sangaji Adat dalam Satu Bengkawan Atap*. Then they solemnly took soil from the top of the graveyard and put it in a coconut shell. While marching in procession to another ancient graveyard in the village of Popon Tua, they spread the soil on the ground to request blessing and salvation so that they would be protected from disaster and maintain their unity.

[357] According to de Jongh, there were five ethnic divisions of the Kao: Boeng, Tugutil, Modole, Pagu and Tololiko, who were known as Kao Islam (de Jongh: 1909, 766). However, according to Magany, the people of Tugutil were an independent ethnic group, which resided on the boarders between Tobelo and Kao. They are categorized as nomadic due to their profession as fisherman. They had spread into Buli, Weda and Gane (Magany: 1984, 156; cf. Martodirjo 1991).

The modifications to the ritual of *Empat Sangaji Adat dalam Satu Bengkawan Atap* suggests three interpretations. One is that the essence of the ritual remains unchanged and confirms that all the Kao people are linked to their inherited history. Secondly, the soil symbolizes the rich natural resources of Kao, which shape their new history together and are now under threat of being taken away by immigrants. Thirdly, the difference between Muslims and Christians is acknowledged by each congregations beginning with their own prayers. However there is no sharp distinction between them in their ritual of unity. In the ritual itself they participate together with no distinction between them.

Symbolic presentations can create patterns of social-cultural ties that transcend class, religion and kinship (Bauman: 1982, 5). However such ties did not exist between the Kao and the Makians, even though they lived within the same geographical area. The priority that the government in Ternate had given to the Makian people in Malifut since their transmigration into the district of Kao in 1975 until the outbreak of violence in 1999 had created a sharp social distinction between the Makians and the Kaos, both Muslim and Christian. Culturally, politically and economically, the Kao Christians and Muslims were united with each other but divided from the Makians.

There have been many influences that could have created divisions among the people of Kao, but they chose to strengthen the basic patterns that were already known and which tied them together rather than to accept a new legitimacy that they were not confident could give them security. In dealing with social change in their everyday life, they chose the security of their ancestral traditions as the starting point to evaluate their actions. They perceived the security provided by their ancestors as a stronger basic pattern than the pattern of religion.[358] A material base supports the guarantee of security through ancestral rituals because their ancestors provide legitimacy for their ownership of the land and the people of Kao rely on the rich natural resources of the area.

7.5.2. Development Policy and Reconciliation

The process of reconciliation requires that development planners pay attention to the needs of all stakeholders in the area. Reconciliation is unlikely without justice. However justice and development of the rich natural resources of Halmahera are even more difficult after the devastation of violent conflict. Unfortunately, after the violence had ceased between the Kaos and the Makians, the Australian gold mining company in the area would not accept either Makians or Kaos as labourers in the mine, for fear of further conflict.[359] The gold mining company began operations at the end of 1998 with exploration of land in the territory of Wangeotak village, at Gosowong in the District of Kao. The

[358] Some of the Kao are certainly deeply committed to their religion, but some are just nominal Christians. One man from Kao responded with a blank stare when asked if he was a Christian. However he proudly acknowledged his membership in GMIH, which is the main Protestant denomination in Halmahera.

[359] From an interview with a former labourer from the gold mining company on in February 8, 2002, in Kao.

exploration covered land owned by the Kao, which the government thought of as having no value. The mining company has operated with imported labourers since the outbreak of the territorial dispute in the middle of July 1999. During the violent conflict the production of gold for export to Australia was not optimal. Labourers were limited in number due to the fighting.

The presence of PT GAI, the Banana Company, brought dynamic change to Halmaheran society that carried the seeds of increased tensions and the explosion of conflict in the region. While the Kao people maintained their internal unity through historical memories of their ancestral traditions, the same mechanism did not work for the Tobelans and Galelans. The Galela, Tobelo and Koa people believed in a common origins myth of Lake Lina that could have served a similar unifying purpose as the Kao myth of the four brothers. In fact the myth of Lake Lina was re-told at the meetings of *Sariloha*, the brotherhood organization set up in January 1999 to prevent conflict. However this myth did not work to unite people because of the new reality shaped by the presence of PT GAI. The myth itself is more about family conflict than about undying unity.

Apart from that, agro industry created fabulous new wealth and sharp dissatisfactions over how it was divided. In the heat of controversy over what happened to the increased compensation paid by PT GAI, certain parties drew attention to the link between religious identity and control over natural resources. The business and managerial classes were mainly Christians from outside the area and they enjoyed differences in material conditions, education and social status. The owners of PT GAI were big investors, Chinese from Jakarta. Directors, managers, and assistants were mainly Christians from North Sulawesi and Toraja. Therefore when the counterfeit letter circulated in Galela, people were already primed to believe there was a Christian conspiracy to take over all the natural resources from the Muslims in the area.

The counterfeit letter resulted in the expulsion of Christians from Tidore and Ternate after the Makians were expelled from Kao. Finally the violence moved to Tobelo, which was already swelled with refugees from Kao, Ternate and Tidore. Tobelo is the biggest centre for the lucrative copra trade in Northern Halmahera and the meeting point for various ethnic groups. Therefore, Tobelo is the political barometer for Galela. One day after the riots began in Tobelo, they moved to Galela and the Banana Company was closed. The loss of employment and the stoppage of banana exports caused hardship for the local people. Villagers from the southern coast such as Soa Sio, Toweka and Simau, who had worked as labourers at the harbours, were also unemployed. Long-term agriculture such as coconuts is the only economic resource for the communities, but agriculture needs financial capital.

Beginning from the harsh realities of the local economy after the violence, a group of leaders from Tobelo and Galela met to discuss a new development plan that involved the local people. In Feberuary 2002, when Tobelo was still a district, the Head of the District (*Camat*) of Tobelo, H. Manetemo, whose leadership is accepted in both Galela and Tobelo, told me that it was important to follow up on

the regional development plan for Tobelo, which would also affect Galela. They were discussing a plan to develop Galela as a major public harbour for commercial traffic so as to open up labour markets in Northern Halmahera. However, political stability in the region is absolutely imperative for attracting big investors into the region. Nevertheless, the key question remains how far any development plan will foster unity and mutual benefit while avoiding the development of too great a gap between the rich and the poor.

7.5.3. Negotiating Security

After the reconciliation process began in Galela and Tobelo, people gradually stopped worrying about the danger of travelling between Tobelo and Galela. However, three times there were mysterious shootings between Christians and Muslims in Galela. It was not clear who were the perpetrators. Nonetheless, the attempt to terrorize through these mysterious shootings, did not stop the efforts to maintain peace. The shootings were accepted by both Muslims and Christians as attempts to terrorize them and prevent reconciliation. A day after the shootings, the Tobelans requested the Galelans to block all transportation along the trans-Halmahera highway whenever there was trouble. This highway is the only significant road in Halmahera and runs from Galela in the North, right down to Ternate, passing through Tobelo.

The leaders blocked off the road to remind people of their commitment to peace, declared in collective rituals like the oath of *tona ma langi*. Cutting off all transportation for a few days caused significant hardship and decreased the likelihood of sympathy for the provocateurs. It also prevented rapid travel in and out of the area by outside radical groups. The Tobelans urged the Galelans to undertake an independent investigation of the shootings that occurred in Galela. The religious and traditional (*adat*) leaders as well as the common people were encouraged to carry out the investigation. However, the investigation reached no conclusions. No one knew the perpetrators. If they did know, they didn't dare give up their names. This incident taught people to increase their awareness especially by going to their plantations together rather than alone.

As a result of the increased security and the community's success in guarding public safety, in May 2002 the Coordinating Minister of Social and Political Affairs, Bambang Susilo Yudhoyono, declared an end to the status of civil emergency in North Moluccas. This resulted in the slow reduction of military presence throughout North Moluccas. While the central government wished to end the civil emergency status and reduce the number of military troops in North Moluccas, the caretaker Governor of the Province wanted to keep the military in the area. He informed the Minister of Domestic Affairs of this desire at a meeting in Jakarta. These different perceptions of what structures were needed for security, did not influence the efforts for reconciliation worked out in the communities. The request of the caretaker Governor could be considered a measured response because of the previous high level of regional conflict. Therefore the government ordered a very gradual withdrawal of troops.

7.6. Conclusion

There can be no doubt that "memory" from before and after the riots is one of the important factors that influences conflict and its resolution. At the beginning of this chapter, I quoted the statement of McBeth who asked us to consider how memories are created and how true they are, because memories give meaning to the lives of human beings. Memory also determines how we divide society. Bauman, in a book titled *Memories of Class*, shows how memories formed social class in England at the end of the 18-century (Bauman: 1982). In this book he says that memory functions to continue history. Memory makes history alive. Societies need a living history in their efforts to understand the meaning of change from an old environment to a new one (Bauman: 1982, 3).

Memory is needed, but at the same time people reconstruct their memories. Human beings forget a bitter history when it can no longer help them to survive the social changes they face. After the riots, a new history was written to give legitimacy to a new reality. This revision of memories may have a political purpose as occurred in the writing of Indonesian history from the perspective of various rulers. At the grass roots level, however, people may try to understand bitter events by relating them their religious or traditional beliefs, such Satan tempting human beings. The people used the word 'disaster' to efface the painful memories of their participation and construct the violence as something similar to what happens in nature. Sometimes human beings can overcome disaster in this way, but sometimes they cannot.

Therefore the history that lives in the memory of communities does not appear as one conceptualisation because it will always need to adjust to changing situations by reflection on the ideas and practices that are available in their tradition (cf. Bauman: 1982, 3). The people processed the history of their ethnic groups and religions in order to recreate their memories of the society in North Moluccas as we have seen in the specific example of the people of Ngidiho. The borders of ethnic history that were not clear before the riots in December 1999 became clear after the conflict. Ethnic identity became identified with religious identity.

Both Christians and Muslims lost family members and the material heritage of many generations. After becoming refugees, forced to flee from their own homeland, they became critical of the ideological propaganda that had led them into war. They saw that religious ideological conflict was connected with material interests. When outsiders began to take over the local people's land, the indigenous farmers became aware that their land in Halmahera is rich and that they must protect it.

Material facts stimulated the people to find or restore ancient meanings that legitimise their right to the land. Genealogical myths and rituals from their ancestral traditions provided orientation for entering the process of negotiating reconciliation. In the process they recognised that their ethnic identities were strengthened by religious practices. The people combined elements from the traditions of their ancestors with religious practices that answered their everyday

needs. The people are creative in modifying rituals to meet new material conditions. Their rituals always return to the basics of economic negotiation and the exchange of their surplus products.

At the same time, however, communities were aware that they needed each other economically. They needed to restore their economic relationships across the borders of religious or ethnic territories. In the face of challenges from outsiders they needed to strengthen local solidarities without regard to religion or tribe. The local government played an important role in providing a neutral position, which could support the process of reconciliation. The people also had to renegotiate their share of power in the relationships between society, religion, government and the military. They needed secure, safe places where former enemies could meet. Not surprisingly, family relationships provided the most resilient bridge between groups. However the government had to secure the borders of the territories that provided the people's political identity. The communities needed reassurance that words spoken in mosques and churches did not cause disintegration in the society. Reconciliation worked in North Moluccas because the people wanted to stop the conflict. Given this strong desire, the communities emphasized the negotiation of security as the necessary reality that had to be supported by government and military.

Reconciliation allowed a return to open and just economic activities but also required a collective ritual of forgetting and the creation of a new, regional solidarity (cf. Gulliver: 1979, 16). In this process of reconciliation, economic interests cannot be divorced from collective rituals in which each person is tied into the community by their common acceptance of the communal rituals that allows them to accept and to forgive. The collective ritual is a combination of religious and ethnic rituals, and both are important. The people reinterpreted their ethnic symbols to integrate them with their religious rituals. Second, they located their religious rituals within the context of ethnic particularity. The people of Galela, Tobelo and the North Moluccas, successfully interpreted their universal values within particular cultural contexts. This enabled them to create a new understanding of themselves and their communities after the violence of December 1999.

Chapter VIII
Collective Ritual in State Formation

> "Let us live within our own country. We have opposed imperialism all our lives. Let us not encourage our youth toward imperialism or give them the spirit of imperialism, the spirit of expansion. Let us educate our youth so that their expansive enthusiasm is converted into constructive work for the good of the country, for which so much has yet to be done" (Yamin, quoted in Feith and Castles: 1970, 436).

The rise of the North Moluccas as a new province in modern Indonesia finally took place after 54 years since the independence of Indonesia. This moment created pride and competition. The Moluccas, known as the Spice Islands played a role in the creation of world capitalism. Malaka was known as the Venice of the East.[360] Treaties were legitimised by religious conversions to Islam, Catholicism or Protestantism that reflected the politics of the world economic order in the 14th and 15th Centuries. Local kingdoms competed to control natural resources like clove and nutmeg. The arrival of the Portuguese opened the door for Western trade in the Spice Islands. The new powers used both religion and violence to stimulate obligation and loyalty, but not without resistance from the people (see Chapter IV).

The Netherlands replaced Portugal and transformed the social system of the Moluccas. In Ambon, the indigenous people who were Catholics converted to Protestantism. This brought them greater physical security, as well as economic and political benefits. However, with regard to the Moluccas, the Netherlands was much more interested in economics than in religion. They transformed the feudal bureaucracies and rationalised the market system. It was the British however, during their occupation from 1811-1818, who instituted modern agribusiness principles by planting clove and nutmeg in different regions, thereby leading to the decrease in the price of spices on the world market. The invention of refrigeration also decreased the value of spices that were no longer essential as preservatives. Change in local politics within the Netherlands led to the new "Ethical Policy" which proposed to educate the indigenous people of the East Indies so that they could educate their own people. During this period, with its emphasis on "civilizing" the people of the East Indies, the Dutch government finally gave permission for Christian missionaries to operate (see Chapter IV). In the middle of the 20th Century, Japan replaced Holland as the imperial power ruling Southeast Asia. Japan equated Christianity with the West and appealed to Islamic identity as a basis for driving the Netherlands out from the East Indies.

[360] cf. Hefner: 2000.

Through all the long history of the Moluccas, ritual functioned as a resource for resistance, protest and peace making. Ritual gives meaning to ethical struggles by unifying human norms and divine values. At the same time, it can be manipulated to create conflict and violence. Material conflicts in a society can be ritualised as ideological conflicts. Society is forced to divide according to ethnicity and religion. When centralized state control is weak during a transition of power, violence can easily erupt. Competing elites use religious discourse to sharply divide their ideology and practices from that of the old leadership, in order to attract support.

This concluding chapter pays attention especially to how collective rituals serve as a means of negotiation that can empower modern society in the North Moluccas and Indonesia. The practice of exchange in the politics of ritual in the North Moluccas is also used by the state. In the context of Indonesia, religion serves as an ideological justification for territorial expansion in the discourse of religious conflict in the North Moluccas. Ritual transformation is linked to the transformation of social structures in the Moluccas. Indonesia is still struggling to build revitalized collective rituals for the common good.

8.1. Rebuilding a Politics of Stability

In the North Moluccas ritual exchanges are used to strengthen social cohesion at all levels of society. Rituals linked the ruler with his people. At the micro level ritual exchanges of "work" (*jojobo*) are tying people together in families, kinship groups and villages. Meanwhile, colonial politics undermined the practices of ritual at the macro level due to the demythologisation of the feudal structures in the society.[361] However rituals are still very alive in the everyday life of the society.[362]

The ritual resolution of the 1999-2000 conflict of the North Moluccas in Halmahera did not really solve the land conflict between the Kao and the Makians. The Makians still do not have their own homeland. The new provincial government in the North Moluccas is trying to rebuild stability in the region. The bitterness of a particular ethnic group may be a means of responsible negotiation or just as a political tool in the ancient struggles among the local elite namely, the Sultans of Ternate, Tidore, Jailolo and Bacan.

8.1.1. A History of Bitterness

The Moluccas has a bitter history. When I was in Ternate in January 2002, a young Muslim man told me that the history of Moluccas is bitter because it is the history of Kings and not of the common people.[363] The people know that the violence in the North Moluccas was fuelled by the political competition among

[361] See Chapter IV.
[362] See Chapter III, IV, VI and VII.
[363] I would like to thank Thamrin for his openness, along with Sanni Mustafa in Ternate and their groups who have shown a deep understanding about the conflict in the North Moluccas. The interview was conducted on 30th of January 2002.

the local leaders in the region.[364] Therefore the question arises of whether the model of political competition between the ancient feudal leaders needs to be repeated in the new construction of modern bureaucratic institutions in the North Moluccas?

The history of bitterness in the North Moluccas is inherited from one generation to another. The people remember the bitterness. They called the clove tree the cursed tree (*kutuk*) to express their bitterness at the competition and war brought to the archipelago during the colonial period.[365] In the North Moluccas, the exploitation of cloves directly affected the common people. Ternate and Tidore competed to take control of the islands of Makian and Moti long before the arrival of the Western traders. Moti and Makian islands were fertile lands that produced wild cloves.[366] The very prosperity of their ancestral land created suffering for the people of Makian and Moti as they were expelled from their own land. Similarly, the suffering of the people of Northern Halmahera (Tobelo, Kao, Galela, etc) stimulated them to become sea pirates as they were caught between the twin tyrannies of the Dutch colonizers and the Sultan of Ternate.

The people pass down from generation to generation, oral histories about the injustices experienced by their tribal ancestors. They create rituals and myths to perpetuate their memories of bitterness and survival. Political pressures, competition for the rich natural resources and oppression, made the people tough. However, in the North Moluccas, the toughest of all are the people of Makian. Theirs is the toughness of those who lost their rich ancestral lands for many centuries. The toughness of the Makians was recognised by the kings who exploited them.[367]

Since Indonesian independence in 1945, Indonesian power struggles are increasingly focused on the control of jobs in the government bureaucracy. Civil service jobs, no matter how poorly paid, command much more prestige than farming. Within the bureaucracy, kinship ties, ethnicity and religion have become major factors in determining the distribution of positions. The economic crisis and the continuing erosion of the value of many agricultural products on the world market accelerated the shift.

The politics of the New Order followed the politics of the Old Order and emphasised the formation of national identity, thereby devaluing local and

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[364] This statement is supported by various reports or articles that appeared in the newspapers after the explosion of conflict between Kao and Malifut in the middle of October 1999. See especially Chapters V and VI.

[365] See Marinjo (2001, 8-9).

[366] The people of Makian moved to Bacan and those from Moti moved to Jailolo. During the period of the British occupation, in the early 19th Century, the people of Makian and Moti returned to their homelands. However, in 1975, the New Order government resettled the people of Makian in the region of Kao, Halmahera because of a threatened volcanic eruption on their island (see Chapters IV and V).

[367] See (Meersman: 1967, 67). Meersman also relates that Ternate and Tidore didn't plant any crops on their own lands because they looked down on the work of farmers. Therefore they were always involved in war to take other people's crops.

regional identities. This marginalized the power of local kingdoms. Exceptionally, Yogyakarta and Aceh received special rights to manage their regions. The limitations of feudal structures in the North Moluccas led to the rise of new leaders in the region. Although the Sultan of Ternate has been a functionary of Golkar since 1971, most of the bureaucratic structures of government in the North Moluccas are filled with ethnic Makians and Tidorese.

The Makian people have suffered much. After finally being allowed to return to their home island during the 19th Century, the Indonesian government evicted them again in 1975 due to a threatened volcanic eruption. They were transmigrated to the district of Kao in Northern Halmahera. However, the local government did not help with the process of socialization in both cultural and legal ways. They were moved to Kao without paying attention to the Makians own aspirations to move to the region of Gane, in the southern part of Halmahera. Makian is much closer to Gane than to Kao. After the 1999-2000 conflict and the Makians' violent eviction from Kao, the government reopened the island of Makian, which had never in fact erupted. The Makians welcomed this policy because it fits with their belief in the ancestral promise that their happiness will only be fulfilled after they returned to their island.[368]

However, at the same time, the government of North Moluccas still maintains a separate District of Malifut Makian within the District of Kao (see Chapter VII). The confusion of this policy is evident in the plan to include the island of Makian in the Regency of Southern Halmahera with Bacan as the capital. In 1990 the island of Makian that lies close to Tidore was not included in the Regency of Central Halmahera.[369] The island of Makian was included in the Regency of Southern Halmahera where Bacan is the capital, based on historical accounts that show that the King of Makian migrated to the island of Bacan. According to the Moti treaty in the 17th century, the control of Makian and Moti was given to Ternate and Tidore respectively.

Even though the island of Makian will be part of the Regency of Southern Halmahera, the District of Malifut Makian Daratan in the land of Kao, Halmahera was planned as part of the Regency of Western Halmahera. However, in 2003, the District of Malifut Makian Daratan was added to the Regency of Northern Halmahera with the capital in Tobelo (see Chapter VII). The policy to keep the District of Makian within the territory of Kao is supported by the Makians. They argue that even though they had conflict with the local people, they have already lived in Malifut for 25 years and were very successful economically. They do not want to move out from the region of Kao. The basic argument shows a contradiction between the Makian's success in adjusting to their new area of settlement and their conflict with the local people of Kao. Actually their desire to return to Kao may not be caused by their history of bitterness but rather by the

[368] This was related to me in an interview in Ternate on the 5th February 2002, with one of the residents of Makian who used to live in Kao but had now returned to the island of Makian.
[369] This information is from an interview with the former Head of The Institute of Regional Planning (Bapeda) of the Regency of the North Moluccas, in Tobelo, on the 9th February 2002.

discovery of gold in the Kao Regency. Since 1998, Indonesia has been exporting gold from the region.

The people of Kao are unimpressed with the history of bitterness in the Makian past.[370] According to them, all the common people in the North Moluccas, whether Kao, Tobelo or Galela experienced the same suffering as the Makians as a result of the combination of hegemonic powers from the local Sultan and the colonizers. Their history is also a history of bitterness, although it is different from the self-history of the Makian people. The people of Kao feel that they have been oppressed by the Makians. Therefore, they reject a political policy that is based on correcting the injustice experienced by the Makians in their past history. They argue that discrimination can only create new violence within the society of the North Moluccas. Besides, the power structure of North Moluccas has changed. The Makians don't need affirmative action since they are more successful than most other groups. Most of Makian, who were marginalized in the past, now dominate most positions in government.

Despite these problems, the efforts at reconciliation and local empowerment through rituals of exchange have enjoyed remarkable success in the North Moluccas (see Chapter VII). The restoration of the Sultan of Jailolo in 2002, based on the myth of *Maluku-Kie-Raha* recreates balance by redressing damage to the kingdom of Jailolo that was attacked by both the Sultan of Ternate and the Portuguese in the late 16th century. The ordination of the Sultan of Jailolo depended on the recognition of the Sultan of Ternate who allowed him to return to the North Moluccas. The Sultan of Ternate fled to Java (Surabaya) after the collapse of his "Yellow troops" who were attacked by the Sultan of Tidore and his people at the end of December 1999. The name of Sultan Jailolo is Abdullah Haryanto,[371] who has mix blood from Java and Ternate. He was born in Seram (near Ambon), where his ancestors lived in exile from the North Moluccas (see Chapter IV). Of course the negotiation for his return is also part of a political move to transfer the symbols of government in the North Moluccas Regency to the District of Jailolo in the island of Halmahera. In the March 2004 national elections, the Sultan of Jailolo ran for local parliament office in the Regency of Western Halmahera (DPRD). He was nominated by the *Partai Demokrat Kebangsaan* (PDK). However he had to compete for the position with the *Jougugu* who traditionally held the role of Prime Minister in the Jailolo Sultanate. The *Jougugu* was nominated by the *PKB* party and argued that it was not appropriate for the Sultan to become a mere member of the local Congress (DPRD).[372]

Conflict resolution in the North Moluccas is often conducted to heal the pains of the past. Present history is the context for re-evaluating the past. Powerful groups in the present shape the interpretation of past history. Elite groups mobilize various minorities and other marginal group in the society to support their

[370] This is from an interview with several Kao people, which was conducted in Kao on the 8th February 2002.
[371] Interview with a leader in Ternate on 28th January 2002.
[372] Data was collected during my visit to Jailolo in March 2004.

position. However the interpretation of the marginal groups is not taken into consideration. To avoid the bias of using past history to support the interests of only the elite, there is an urgent need to strengthen the process of democracy so that the voices of the poor are also heard.

8.1.2. Ritual Exchange and Collective Negotiation

Van der Veer argues that kinship rituals are less used to mobilize the masses in comparison to religious rituals because religious rituals are more universal and ideological (van der Veer: 1994, 119-120).[373] This distinction rests on a questionable dichotomy since the North Moluccans don't distinguish between kinship and religious rituals. In the process of reconciliation in the North Moluccas, local rituals rooted in the practices of families, kinship groups, clans and villages were expanded to give space for people from the same community to reinterpret their practices. Local rituals were expanded to give a sacred dimension to the unity of the society. Even before the violence in December 1999 in Ngidiho, conflicts were resolved by following the everyday agricultural rituals as a guide for revising labour salaries at PT GAI. Regional development plans should not only emphasize exploration for natural resources, but should also structure political, economic and legal systems consistent with the ritual practices of the local culture.

Of course rituals of exchange are not a panacea. They too can be manipulated to only serve the interests of a narrow kinship or religious group. Nevertheless, rituals of exchange are often used to overcome the segregation created by religion. Rituals of exchange aim at building responsibility for mutual cooperation and extend the network of friendships in society.[374] The manipulation of rituals of exchange without responsibility can sharpen divisions in society according to ethnicity, religion or kin-networks. If rituals strengthen a monopoly of power, centralized in one faction, then greed can seriously damage the tolerance in the society.

In contrast, the exchange practices shown in the common people's rituals, brought reconciliation in the North Moluccas by restraining the centralisation of power in the hands of only one ethnic, tribal or religious group. In the Central Moluccas a similar principle is called *pela*. The core of this practice is exchange. Exchange can be done with material or physical services. I don't agree with Rustam Kastor who says that the ritual of *pela* was created to manipulate the differences of the Moluccan people that are shaped through religion (Kastor: 2000b). *Pela* is not specifically oriented to Muslims and Christians but unites all parties within a limited community regardless of their religion. People who live as neighbours

[373] Van der Veer distinguishes between ancestral rituals and pilgrim rituals. The ancestral rituals concentrate on family whereas the pilgrim rituals relate to the community at large (see van der Veer: 1994, 119-120). The difficulty of this dichotomy is illustrated by the religion of Numa, which were the family rituals of the Emperor and the religion of the Roman Empire. This ritual was used to expand empire while at the same time it appreciated the local practices of the community that it subjected (See Henry, 1979, 4-9).
[374] cf. Russel: 1989, 35.

need exchange practices in their everyday life. The ritual of *pela* creates a safe context in which people can interact by exchanging what they have with what others need. In Central Moluccas, ritual *pela sirih* (betel nut) and *pinang* (acreca nut) functions to extend relationships outside genealogical and ideological lines (see Chapter IV). This ritual was created out of the everyday practices of the people before they became Christians or Muslims.

Ritual expresses a people's humanity fulfilling the sacred message of their religions. But ritual is ineffective if there is discrimination and injustice within the society. The practice of ritual exchange in the marriage process in Ngidiho includes a secret means of maintaining balance in the society. Modernization disconnects people from their origins if they don't manage the process of cultural transformation carefully. Ritual exchange is a fundamental resource that can break down the isolation and alienation experienced between members of a family as a result of social change.

This dissertation shows that ritual is used to create conflict as well as reconciliation. Ritual can stimulate conflict not only between those who are from different religions but also within the same religion. Different traditions and symbols of legitimacy were already common among the people before they converted to the "new" religious teaching. The inheritance of traditions and symbols of legitimacy from before the arrival of world religions enriched the ritual practices of the different religions that displaced their predecessors. However rituals can also become issues of conflict within a religion, for example, as seen in the polemics about "syncretism" and "pure religion."

Perhaps there is truth in the common assertion in Western academic discourse that ritual become empty when used without commitment (Eckstein: 1992, 276). Ritual is related to social change, in which new values and practices replace the old ritual practices. From the perspective of the new practices, the old ones are static and empty of meaning. However, new political movements don't eliminate all rituals but rather replace the old with new rituals that distinguish the new regime from the former institutions of power. As shown in my research in Galela, the changing meaning of the *Cakalele* dance, serves as an example of how rituals change. First it was a dance to welcome the safe return of raiding pirates. Then it became a wedding dance and part of the material negotiations between families. Most recently it regained a warlike meaning in the context of violence between religious groups.

In the academic narration, the practices of exchange often are interpreted as elements within relationships between patrons and clients. According to James Scott, the relationship of patron and client is a vertical relationship. The basic characteristics of this relationship is of an all powerful patron who can guarantee economic and political security, in a relationship with followers who pay gifts in order to gain benefits from their patron (Scott: 1977, 123-125). This appears to be an oversimplification if compared with the practices of common people in the North Moluccas. Feudal relations between patrons and clients didn't only appear in the old kingdoms of the North Moluccas but also in the new structures of the

Indonesian government since the Old Order up to now. In the Colonial period, there are patron-client relations between the colonizers with the local kings. Van Klaveren categories the model of paying a salary to a Sultan in Java as *upeti* (tribute) (van Klaveren: 1953, 115,116). However, neither van Klaveren nor Scott pay attention to the patron-client relationships that are transformed by the common people who understand gift exchange as requiring reciprocal action from both sides.

Ritual exchange among the common people shows an alternative model that is different from the politics of domination by the government that tends to create unequal patron-client relationships. Actually in the current government of North Moluccas, which is dominated by Makian ethnic leadership, the principle of exchange works well among people who share ethnic bonds but tends to exclude other ethnic groups. The principle of exchange is widely practiced among all ethnic groups in the North Moluccas. However there is an urgent need to develop exchange rituals across ethnic lines. This is underlined by the claim of trans-ethnic Indonesian identity that applies to all citizens and gives everyone the right to stay openly anywhere in Indonesian teritory. Widespread migration, both from outside and inside the North Moluccas, forces new settlers to develop an exchange relationship with the indigenous inhabitants so that they can build solidarity that transcends the relations of family, clan and tribe in the local place where they stay together as neighbours of the the same Indonesian people.

8.2. Contemporary Ritual in Indonesian Politics

Muhammad Yamin made a famous statement about the borders of Indonesia as defined by eight genealogical territories defined by different ethnic groups. The eight ethnic territories are Sumatra, Malaya, Borneo, Java, Celebes, Lesser Sundas, Moluccas and Papua (Yamin: 1945, 1-4). Yamin also referred to the statement of Gadjah Mada about the territory of Islam. Identities are tied to land. Each ethnic group developed political loyalties that were shaped by the ritual domains of religions like Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam or Christianity. However the origins of the religions do not lie within the ethnic framework. Anthony Reid says that the heterogeneous, pre-colonial territory of South East Asia was united by natural environments, trading and local diplomacy. The creation of the archipelago as one region was not made by language, high religion, ancient culture or wisdom (quotation in Philpott: 2000, 96). People are united or divided according to the borders that are available in nature as agreed together by various communities. In Northern Halmahera, the principle of *tolagumi* becomes the criteria for territory claims of each tribe (see Chapters III, IV and VII).

Yamin analyses the formation of Indonesia by combining the methods of precolonial territorial claims based on ethnicity and the territorial formulations after colonialism in which religious perspectives such as Hindu and Islam appeared. Yamin's territorial rhetoric should be understood in the context of the Dutch "Ethical Policy" at the end of the 19th Century in which Christianity was associated first with modernity and then, under Japanese occupation as a symbol of Western imperialism (see Chapter IV). The territory of Hinduism symbolized

the influence of Hindu kingdoms in the politics of trade before colonialism. Islam was constructed as a symbol of resistance against the old orders of Hindu and Buddhist kingdoms and then against Colonialism. During the conflict in the Moluccas, religiously defined territories again played an important role in mobilizing people to participate in violence. Political, economic and cultural conflicts were subsumed by religious rhetoric. This phenomena shows that the more people emphasize global religious solidarity, the less commitment they show to common local practices and beliefs. Translocal solidarity can lead to violence between groups that each claim a universal, absolute belief system. Therefore we may question the assumption of Yamin that religion can replace ethnic solidarity to bring forth a united Indonesia.

The following sub-section explores how sacred symbols of territorial discourse were used by the New Order government to unite the diverse societies of Indonesia into one nation.

8.2.1. Pancasila as a Sacred Border

The founding fathers created Pancasila as a collective ritual to unite the nation-state of Indonesia. After the fall of Suharto, Pancasila lost its sacred aura. Indonesians are disillusioned with Pancasila because Suharto used it to legitimate his powers (see Chapter V). However, in my opinion, Pancasila is a powerful symbol that still provides the most basic justification for the nation-state of Indonesia. Pancasila is not just five principles of political morality or a state ideology that supports a common legal system. Pancasila is the sacred border of Indonesia. Without Indonesian territory, Pancasila would never have existed. Conversely, without Pancasila, the territory of Indonesia that contains many different ethnic, language and religious groups, would never have come into being. The abuse of Pancasila by the New Order regime undermined the balance necessary for unity in Indonesia. One of the major tasks of the new leadership in the coming year will be to revitalize Pancasila (or some alternative ideology), in order to tie together a diverse nation. As an ideology of politics, Pancasila is not a religion, as feared by some (see Ismail: 1985, 173 ff). However it is part of a sacred ritual language to unite the nation.[375]

Reconciliation efforts after the conflict in the North Moluccas demonstrate that differences of religion can be accepted as a strength in Indonesian society. Religions can work with each other and with other social institutions to create collective rituals that maintain a dynamic balance in the society. The conversion of most Indonesians from their ancient local religions to one of the global, monotheist religions is a basic fact that underlies the state's politics. Indonesia is founded on belief in "The Great Unity of Deity" (*Ketuhanan yang Maha Esa*).

[375] Pancasila could be considered part of a "civil religion" for Indonesia. However this term is misleading, since it seems to place "civil religion" as a competitor with other religions rather than a state ideology. I prefer to see Pancasila as part of a sacralized national ritual, rather than a civil religion. Robert N. Bellah, who is known for his discussion of "civil religion" in America, is now very cautious about using the phrase since it invites so much misunderstanding. See, (Bellah:1970), and (Bellah and Hammond: 1980).

Thus far, most Indonesians have accepted this phrase as a fundamental assertion that they all hold in common, because they are self-defined as a religious people.[376] According to my research among the Galela people, respect for ancestors was already the common practice before the people converted to the global religions.

Perhaps the formulation, "The Great Unity of Deity" in *Pancasila* refers to the sacred value of honouring your ancestors, which is honoured by all religious people in Indonesia.[377] This common belief and practice is shared and validated in Islamic as well as Christian teachings, which were contextualised within the local context (see Chapter IV). The Abrahamic religions of Islam and Christianity believe that Adam and Eve were the common ancestors of all human beings. Shared memories of a united past, which recognises common ancestors, provides the people with a strong and logical sense of sacred relationships that must be passed on and honoured by future generations. If all the people honour their common ancestors, each will feel protected and secure within their belief borders.

However, the practices of global monotheism in Indonesia sharply differentiate the role of God from the role of the ancestors. As a result, the rituals of local, tribal beliefs are not defined as religions and the Indonesian people have to choose one of the major religions: Muslim, Christian, Hindu or Buddhist. The emphasis on the unity of the nation led Hindus to redefine their religion as fundamentally monotheistic (see Chapter II). Beatty's research on the creation of collective rituals in East Java, shows how collective rituals such as the *slamatan*, are polyvalent. They are capable of multiple interpretations. People from different religions or streams (*aliran*), can participate together in one ritual that means different things to each of them. Polyvalent rituals maintain a delicate balance between different groups and allow Hindus, Christians and mystics to resist state domination through Islamic rhetoric. The experience of extreme violence in the area during 1965-66 lends urgency to the efforts to maintain religious balance (Beatty: 1999).

In 2002, President Megawati announced a national holiday for the celebration of Imlek, or Chinese New Year, which is a religious holiday for the Confucian religion (*Kong Hu Cu*).[378] The recognition of the Confucian holiday to honour the ancestors was welcomed, especially by the Chinese-Indonesia community. Even Amien Rais, a conservative Muslim leader suggested that the new holiday should not be a matter of debate since Indonesia is multiethnic and multireligious. Amin Rais' comment about the Indonesian policy of respecting the celebrations of Confucianism should be read in light of the struggle in the Islamic world, especially in Indonesia, to find the right balance between the teachings of Islam

[376] Up until now, all citizens of Indonesia are required to follow one of five religions: Islam, Christianity (Catholic or Protestant), Hinduism, Buddhism or Confucianism. There is no way to know how many citizens might define themselves differently if given the chance.
[377] See Kompas (February 18, 2002).
[378] In 2003 the government improved its status from being provisional to become definitive. The policy of recognizing Confucianism began under the government of Aburrahman Wahid in 2001. See Kompas (February 18, 2002).

and the political recognition of equal citizenship for all. Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im writes that the teaching of the Qur'an can be reconciled with modern constitutionalism and human rights if the *ummah* is reinterpreted to include all citizens of a nation-state. This reinterpretation provides a foundation to respect the equal rights of non-Muslims including those who do not believe in Allah (God), as in animism, atheism or agnosticism (An-Naim: 1994a, 72-74). Since independence Indonesia has theoretically recognized the equal rights of all her citizens.

National religious holidays are a good test of how far different religious communities can accept each other. Religious holidays are national rituals that can unite or divide the religious communities. Religious holidays have often served as the starting point for religious violence, for example "Bloody Idul Fitri" in Ambon, 1999, or the outbreak of violence in Halmahera following Christmas, 2000. However, the celebration of religious holidays also provides an opportunity for members of different religious communities to celebrate together. For example, in Java, the celebration of Idul Fitri and the Islamic New Year (1 Muharam) are usually enjoyed by both Muslims and Christians together. When I was working in Halmahera, the celebration of Muslim and Christian holidays was conducted together as family or kin-celebrations. The former Governor of the Moluccas, Latuconsina reminded the people of how Christmas and Idul Fitri were traditionally celebrated by both Christians and Muslims in Ambon, who visited each other (Tempo Detik: 2002). Celebrations strengthen unity within a society. Celebration educates both the state and the people to get involved with giving and receiving gifts.[379] Sekimoto writes that the state rituals of national holidays are carried out in villages all across Indonesia. The people participate from all different backgrounds, giving and receiving gifts and services without regard to religious differences (Sekimoto: 1990, 57-73).

In Indonesia, the state proclaims great ideals, but forgets its responsibility to carry out the principle of justice and democracy for the whole society. Deliar Noer suggests several way to actualise Pancasila in concrete as an implementation of the state's services to society (quotation in Ismail: 1995, 181-182). The actualisation of Pancasila requires good law enforcement that guarantees security and justice. Pancasila requires strong social solidarity in which people work together to eliminate the deep divisions between the rich and the poor. The lofty principles expounded in the *Pedoman Penghayatan dan Pengamalan Pancasila*, (known as P4, The Guide for Comprehension and Implementation of Pancasila), must be expressed in real practices. Unfortunately, the formalization of Pancasila as a New Order political mantra used to justify every dubious government development project became a boomerang for the government. The people were not deceived.

Exchange between two or more parties has to begin with recognition of equality. Offerings of services are just as important as negotiation of material things. Political promises during election campaigns cannot serve as rituals of exchange

[379] cf. van der Linden:1996,18.

because they seem to carry no sacred weight (see Chapter V). The state needs to offer real things to the people, like the improvement of labours' salaries, limitations on presidential periods in office and plans for regulation of development that protects the grass roots people from big investors who want to steal their land and resources. In reality, the Indonesian government has usually sided with the exploiters against the people. The government produces huge amounts of regulations that become tools for corruption but seldom protect the people (see Thoolen: 1987).

8.2.2. Ethnic Territories within National Borders

The ritual of reconciliation that was carried out to solve the conflict in the North Moluccas is a ritual of territory. *Tona ma langi* is the border where during the colonial period there was a treaty between the ancestors from the ethnic Tobelo and Galela. In the process of reconciliation that began in October 2000, *tona ma langi* changed its function just marking the border of an ethnic territory and became the boundary for an ethnic religious territory (see Chapter VII).

During the conflict, both sides constructed Tobelo as a symbol of Christianity and Galela as a symbol of Islam. The meaning of territory that was constructed through collective tribal rituals took on a new religious meaning. Historical memory shapes the symbolic meaning of the land, but new experiences and new material conditions change and renew the territorial means of uniting and distinguishing the different groups. The process led up to the violence. The counterfeit letter had already raised the spectre of religiously defined territory. The land had been divided by ethnic borders but the letter suggested that one group (the Christians), wanted to make all of the land a Christian territory.

In Kao the conflict started as an ethnic conflict over land, but the counterfeit letter shifted the discourse to the threat of religious imperialism. An unknown author whose real identity is hidden behind the convenient term "provocateur" wrote the counterfeit letter. The letter reduced the complex economic, political, social and cultural conflicts of Halmahera into black and white war between religions. People, who have developed complex rituals to negotiate political, economic, social and cultural differences, are willing to kill and die for their religion.

Political formation through the manipulation of religion is as ancient as human history. In the Middle Ages, various emperors extended their territory in the name of religion. In the North Moluccas the conflict between the Catholic traders from Portugal and the Protestant Dutch East Indies Company is a history of violence in which the native peoples were the main victims. The same history of violence was carried out by Spain in the Americas (Taussig: 1980) and the Ottoman Empire in Northern Africa (McCarthy: 1995).

When an ideology becomes the official religion of the state,[380] a single, universal religion homogenized the people's identity so that they were easier to control by what Ernest Renan calls the politics of amnesia. They were made to forget other primary loci of identity (see Gellner: 1983, 168). Freedom of religion did not lead to the loss of religion in the Western world. European nationalism largely replaced religion as the locus of identity, at least for a time. In my opinion, the true role of religion is to free human beings from violence and discrimination. Ironically, violence and discrimination are often conducted in the name of religion.[381]

Religion plays a dual role. First, religion is located outside the structures of public power. In the West, it is deliberately separated from political power. However secondly, religion is often reincarnated, explicitly or implicitly, inside the structures of power. The "religion" of nationalism gives rise to a kind of civil religion where the state is sacralized and demands a higher allegiance from its citizens that transcends all other religions. In both World War I and World War II, nationalism served in place of religion as the one value worth killing and dying for. In this context we may interpret Suharto's insistence that Pancasila be accepted as the only foundation for every recognized religion in Indonesia (*Asas Tunggal*), as an attempt to form a single, universal civil religion of Indonesian nationalism. In secularised societies, a national civil religion may replace the religious impulse of the people, however in Indonesia, civil religion does not replace religion but provides a neutral space for a common identity that transcends the primordial identities of ethnicity and religion.[382]

On the other hand, the New Order regime did not hesitate to use violence to create a politics of homogenisation. Suharto used violence to attack and control, not only militant religious groups, but any group that resisted homogenisation or opposed the policies of the "Father of Development." The New Order deceived various groups by creating factions according to religion and ideology that expended all their political energy in fighting with each other. Hefner vividly names these practices as those of a "state without civilisation" (*negara tidak beradab*) (Hefner: 2000; see Chapter V). The government was a political actor, not only within its own bureaucracies but also infiltrated civil organizations, militias, businesses and even groups of protestors. The contradictions within the politics of the New Order created counter attacks and violent reactions with in society. The violence in Halmahera may partly be attributed to a reaction from victims of New Order policies that stripped them of their land and manipulated their religious sentiments.

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[380] Christianity first became the official religion of the Roman Empire during the reign of Constantine who was Emperor of Byzantium. Before this political moment, Christianity was only a religion of the people. Jesus Christ was killed because he proclaimed a higher allegiance to the Kingdom of God, above that of the Roman Empire. His followers included many of the common people, the poor and the marginalized who suffered under Roman oppression.

[381] A similar view is held by Mitsua Nakamura who says that the Muhamadiyah movement was created to oppose the corruption of politics and the coalition between the colonial government and the local potentates. This movement for liberation was inspired by Islamic teachings (Nakamura: 1977, 1-20).

[382] cf. Bellah and Hammond:1980 and Haar:1948, 25.

Religious distinctions in society are sharpened by differences in economic ownership. New social and economic classes appeared within or along side of the old structures of society. PT GAI, the Banana Company introduced a new labour market and attracted educated labourers from North Sulawesi and Toraja who were Christian. Some educated labourers who were Muslim also came from the North Moluccas and occupied middle level positions up to the level of Assistant Managers, however the top managers were Christians. In contrast, the local people who sold their land for a cheap price to the company only worked as field labourers, taking care of the banana plants or working in the packing houses. The transition of power after the fall of Suharto generated conflicts among the elite who exploited tensions among the common people for their own purpose. For example, students led the demonstrations to demand better compensation from the Banana Company for the people's land.

After the violence subsided, the people re-evaluated the role of religion in society. To what extent was religion actually a tool for expansion of power by certain groups, and to what extent was religion a tool of peace? The everyday religious practices of both Muslims and Christians supported the movement for reconciliation and the people became critical of those who used religion for their own self-interest. For example, Muslims from Galela rejected the demands of outside members of the *Laskar Jihad* to take possession of the lands that belonged to Christians who had fled. In Ngidiho, Islam was well integrated with the local culture and ensured the appreciation of women, who traditionally took leadership in running the family economy, even though their role in public leadership of religious rituals was restricted. Similarly, the Halmaheran Church generally affirms the equal power of women, including their role as ministers and leaders of the community (see Chapters III and IV).

Religion forms the identity of the Indonesian people. Therefore it is not surprising that someone like Muhamad Yamin could refer to territories as marked by religion, for example, "the Hindu territory" or "the territory of Islam." However Indonesia in the 20 century is spread over 17,000 islands that are marked by a rich diversity of religions, cultures and languages.

Forces from outside have always dynamically influenced the identities of the peoples of Indonesia. It is not always easy to distinguish outside influence from imperialism. Yamin saw the struggle for Indonesian independence as a struggle against imperialism, which he saw as the spirit of expansion (see Yamin in Feith and Castle: 1970, 436). Unfortunately, imperialism may not only come from outside, but may also occur within Indonesia. People on the so-called "outer islands" sometimes viewed Sukarno and Suharto as foreign emperors. According to Kahar Muzakar, various rebellions, such as DI/TII, RMS and PKI where reactions to the imperialism of Sukarno who tried to reinvent the feudalism of the Majapahit Empire within the system of a modern republic (Muzakar in Feith and Castle: 1979, 331, see also Chapters IV and V). Feudalistic and imperialistic elements in the reign of Suharto are easy to find. For example, Suharto's Golkar mobilized the military, right down to the village level (*babinsa*), to ensure that

Suharto won every election. Use of military violence to ensure political control is an age-old practice of imperialist powers over their conquered territories.

In the case of the North Moluccas, we saw how the Kao people struggled to maintain their land and how the regional government confronted the problem by asserting the higher legitimacy of national law over local custom. The regional government attacked the claim of the Kao people over their land by saying that they were only bickering over fields of straw. The government based their argument on the National Constitution (UUD1945) that states that the entire land, water and production of the earth is controlled by the state.[383] In contrast, the claims of the Kao people are not written in recognized legal documents.

Like most indigenous peoples the Kao rely on the oral traditions of their ancestors. They describe the land where the Makian people live as the land of Kao through the work of their ancestor that is marked by the process of *tolagumi* (see Chapter V). Their land ownership is also supported by stories, for example the myth about "Four Sangajis under one thatched roof" (*Empat Sangaji dalam satu bengkawan*).[384] Formal treaties that are still the basis of ongoing practices also support their claim. For example, the border between Kao and Jailolo was the result of an agreement between the ancestors of Kao and Jailolo. Anyone from Jailolo who takes products from the land or sea while passing into Kao territory has to pay tribute to the adat leader of Kao.[385] The same regulation also applies to someone from Kao who takes a harvest from the land or sea of Jailolo.

The debate between the people of Kao and the government of the North Moluccas about whether land ownership should be regulated by state law or by adat law, portrays a contradiction in the thinking of the Indonesian people. On the one hand there is a professed respect for Indonesian cultures, on the other hand there is a desire to be modern. National leaders have tended to reject ritual, adat practices from the everyday life of the common people in favour of accepting state law. Adat law was considered primitive in comparison with state law that was considered rational and modern. According to Daniel Lev, before independence most of the national elite tended to portray adat law as a sign of under development (Lev: 2000, 103-105). State law is also easier to manipulate in favour of the interests of the elite. Development projects, such as the Banana Company, *PT GAI* in Galela dismissed the agricultural practices of the local people as relatively worthless. The Galelans had developed highly complex knowledge and ritual practices concerning the cultivation of bananas and the management of their plantation land. Nevertheless the government viewed local knowledge as irrelevant for modern agro industry. The agricultural system of the people was pushed aside and the people were forced to sell their land to the company. The government ensured that the price of the land was kept cheap by

[383] This statement is from UUD 1945 article 29.
[384] See Chapter VII.
[385] From an interview with a Kao leader on February 8, 2002.

using the same designation for uncultivated land as they used in the conflict with Kao, i.e. "fields of straw" *(jerami)*.[386]

Nevertheless, the government of the North Moluccas turned to adat law to empower the people to participate in the ritual practices of reconciliation (see Chapter II and VII). At the same time, the local government still displays a double standard in rejecting the role of adat for solving the land dispute between the Kao people and the Makians. Since the regional government is dominated by Makians, it is not surprising that they primarily refer to the Constitution (UUD 1945) that doesn't recognize the adat claims of the Kao people but regards all the land as under the control of the government of Indonesia.

In my opinion, the purpose of the Constitution (UUD 1945) is to arrange Indonesian society according to the people's own customs, traditions, religions and the ways of life. Wherever possible, adat law should be encompassed in national law. The transformation of adat law into national law correlates with the transformation of political governance from local systems into district, regional, provincial and national systems. At the micro level the adat system needs to be transformed into a governmental system (Slamet - Velsink: 1986). These systems were created to ensure justice and democracy in the multicultural layers of Indonesian society. Local governments can only guarantee future stability for a region if they honour the principles of adat law and religion, within the boundaries of the Constitution. Of course it is not easy to find the right balance between honouring local particularities and implementing more universal principles.

8.3. The Dialectic between Universalism and Particularism

Ritual brings sacred legitimacy to particular material conditions. Prior to the monotheistic religions, power was legitimised and centralized in the ancestral forces. Power was fundamentally rooted in the community and in nature. In her research, Visser shows that the most important local figure in Awer, Sahu was considered the "Lord of the Domain". His authority stemmed from the dominion of the ancestors and he was responsible to provide a village Head for the welfare of the people. The people refer to the village Head as the "younger brother" of the Lord of the Domain. The Indonesian government modernized the local government bureaucracy and introduced alternative bureaucratic authority such as the *Camat* who is known in Sahu as the *Dinas.* During the ritual of the 'Great Cooking" in *sabua* when people come to contribute their food, there are two seats of honour provided, one for the "younger brother" (village Head), and the other for the *Dinas*.[387]
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[386] See Chapter III. Lev shows that the development of state law, like civil law, is based on *adat* law as it appears in the system of families in Indonesia (Lev: 2000, 107ff). The individual rights of ownership relates to the division of families, for example, husbands, wives and children. According to Lev, the formulation of principles to govern economic relations between different individuals is influenced by both *adat* law and civil law in the European tradition (Lev: 2000, 124-125; 130-133).
[387] (Visser: Unpublished paper, no year, page 11).

The monotheistic religions claimed God conferred power on his representative (*Kalifah*). The very fact that a person became King, Sultan or "Resident" implied that they were appointed by God irrespective of the wishes of the people. The doctrine of the divine right of kings/sultans has all but disappeared in the modern world, replaced by the almost universal democratic ideology that power resides in the people. However governments still use sacred rituals to acquire legitimacy, often appealing to transcendent, universal truths (such as *Pancasila*). "Universal" conceptions, or particular interpretations of them that are determined by the dominant power of the time, often come into conflict with more particular, local versions of *political* truth. In the political context of Islam and Christianity, the tension between universal principles and particular traditions is perennial.[388]

Dominant groups extend their own civilization by universalising their own cultural and ritual practices. For example, converts of English missionaries not only took on Western clothing and hairstyles, they also learned to drink English tea at 4 PM each day. Before the West arrived in Southeast Asia, Islam spread with remarkable tolerance for local ritual practices (see Chapters III and IV). However during the period of Western colonialism, local rulers sharpened the distinctions between religions and cultures, often by introducing "original" Arabic Islamic rituals and suppressing local practices. The 'politics of ritual' distinguished between the different ritual and political orientations of nobles, (*priayi*), peasants (*abangan*) and 'orthodox Muslims' (*santri*). The *priayi* accommodated whoever was in power, including collaboration with the colonialists, but maintained their ideological detachment. The *abangan* evolved their own distinct synthesis of local traditions with Islam, accommodating the ideology of the powerful with their ancestral practices, while the *santri* tried to recover a pure and rational understanding of universal Islamic practices while avoiding compromise with local beliefs.[389]

In the context of modern Indonesia, the tension between universal ideologies and particular, cultural approaches can be found in both Islamic and Christian practices (cf. Siddique: 1997). Both Christians and Muslims have rationalized religion by maintaining a universal revelation that may be interpreted differently in particular contexts. The challenge is to apply religious discourse as appears in the Qur'an and the Bible to particular cultural and political contexts of Indonesia (Meuleman: 2001, 1-12). In my opinion, these are noble efforts as long as they do not sink into religious formalism or absolutism that denies the multicultural pluralism of Indonesia and impose a particular religious or cultural ideology on all. Religious or cultural absolutism often leads to conflict over competing truth claims that may be masks to hide a struggle for power in the name of religion. Religion is used as a tool to attract the loyalty of new followers. In the history of the North Moluccas, we can see the politics of ritual in the practices of various

[388]See Chapter II. The differences between the two Islamic mainstreams, Sunni and Shi'a can be traced back to the political cultures of two main ethnicities before they embraced Islam. Youssef M. Choueiri argues that the conflict between Mu'awiya and Caliph Ali after the death of Muhammad were political conflicts between two ethnic groups with different political traditions, rather than theological or religious conflicts (Choueiri:1989, 45).

[389] See (Nakamura: 1977); cf. (Syamsudin: 1995a 47-98) and (Geertz: 1960).

Sultans as well as the Portuguese and Japanese colonizers. The Sultans joined Islamic trade networks while the Portuguese urged their partners to join the universal (Catholic) Church. Meanwhile the Japanese used the repertoire of "anti Christian, anti West as the political language to build loyalty with Indonesians. Only the Dutch seemed not to care what religion their subjects followed as long as there was a profit to be made. Perhaps that is one secret of their long success!

Din Syamsuddin distinguishes between three approaches to the contextualisation of Islam in Indonesia (Syamsudin: 1995b). First, the approach of Islamic formalism, secondly, a substantialist approach and third fundamentalism. Formalism accepts the Islamic values of the original Arab cultural context as universal values that must be applied in all different particular settings. This approach emphasizes that both the substance and the form of Islamic rituals do not change and must be carried out legalistically. Formalism aims to create an Islamic state because political power is needed to control the homogenizing process of Islamic practices in society. In contrast, the substantialist approach emphasizes that Islam stands for universal values and principles that may be applied differently in different contexts. The content of Islamic universal principles, not their form, is what is important. According to substantialists, it is not important for the state to adopt the symbols or attributes of Islam as long as adheres to the fundamental teachings of the Prophet concerning justice, law, morality, etc. The goal is not for Islam to gain political power but rather for Islam to reshape the society, including the hearts and practices of the people. Thirdly, the fundamentalist approach is similar to formalism in asserting a single, absolute truth, but is sceptical of the attempt to seize political power. Fundamentalists challenge the status quo of Islam when it seizes control of the state. Some fundamentalists believe that Muslims must cleanse themselves from within rather than seek power. They are like formalists in insisting on a very literal interpretation of scriptures but more like substantialists in emphasizing inner change rather than using the power of the state. According to Syamsuddin this approach is temporary as it serves as a critique of the other two approaches when they are unsuccessful.

Reflecting on Syamsuddin's typology, we can distinguish two different conceptions of universalism. First, the substantialist approach suggests a universalism in which that which is universal may appear differently in different cultural contexts. The quality that is universal will be recognized even if the actual practices, words and symbols used are different. Something is called universal if its quality is recognised in an ever-widening area even though it is labelled with a different name. For example, the word '*sapi*' is an Indonesian word that corresponds to the English word "cow". The cow remains the same (universal), even though it is named and even conceptualised differently in different places. Similarly, the truths of a particular religion may be named differently without losing their essential truth.

Secondly, in contrast with substantialist universalism, the formalistic and fundamentalistic approaches understand a particular word, conception and practice from a particular time and place as universal, even if they are not yet

understood nor accepted in other contexts. The truth was once and for all time displayed at Mecca and Medina during the 7th Century and we must return as literally as possible to the commandments of the prophet that are seen as the Words of God. This conception of universalism is displayed in all kinds of messianic nationalism that proclaims a particular political agenda as the universal path to salvation for the people (cf. I. Aaron: 1967; Schulte Nordholt – Visser: 1997).

This latter kind of universalism has been a significant cause of conflict for all of human history. Modern movements for democratic freedoms and protection of human rights have placed increasing pressures on states to emancipate their citizens without trying to shape their religious or political identity. Instead, universal qualities that appear in all cultures suggest a global ethic that unites rather than divides different religions and ideologies. The Islamic world is struggling to understand how the universal values of Islam can flourish in the modern world without loosing their unique particularity that is rooted in Arab culture.[390] New methods of historical interpretation in Islam have led to an outpouring of new ideas, including new understandings of the emancipation of women in the Islamic theology (see Wahud: 1999; Abugideiri: 2001).

Christianity also continues to struggle with the dialectic between universal and particular truths. Historical critical methods of interpretation are commonplace in Christian theology, and have led to radical cultural relativism in some academic circles. Contextualized theology refuses to recognize any particular cultural forms as universal. There is no particular Christian culture and all cultures are in principle opened to the work of God. Unfortunately not all Christians are tolerant. The fastest growing segments of the Christian church tend towards fundamentalism and/or Pentecostalism, often advocating one particular cultural style as the absolute, universal truth. Since the United States is the only current world empire, it is not surprising that fundamentalists mistake American styles of Christianity as the universal truth. Just as there is great diversity in Islamic views of universal truth, so there is great diversity in world wide Christianity. Therefore generalizations are risky. However it is safe to say that most mainline Protestant and Catholic theology favours dialogue between religions and work to promote justice rather than efforts to impose a particular form of religion as the universal truth (see Knitter: 1989, cf. Adeney: 1995).

Formalism, whether Christian or Muslim, universalises the particular and uses ritual in service of a political movement. The formalists use religion to disconnect society from local practices that actually have universal meaning as they tie the people together within the traditions of their families, clans, tribes and nation. Formal religious principles that are universalised as the will of God may increase solidarity within a limited group of fellow believers even as they break down the social ties that are available outside of the original religious tradition. Imposition of absolute norms extends the power of a particular religious elite who claims

[390] This struggle can be seen in Indonesia, for example, through the reflections of Nurcholid Madjid and Paramadina and in Malaysia through the Sisters of Islam community. See (Othman: 1994).

divine revelation as their legitimation for forcing their will on everyone else. This form of universalism rationalized imperialist politics during the colonial period and continues wherever a government uses nationalist rhetoric to justify exploitation of the weak without regard for the will of the people (cf. Headley: 1997).

A shift in our understanding of universalism and particularism in relation to the politics of religion can give a new face to religion itself. The universal significance of religion is located in a larger understanding of religious truth. Coercive political policies based on a single religious community's understanding of universal truth cannot claim legitimacy in a pluralistic society that conceives of the people as sovereign. It might appear that this shift in paradigm implies a complete separation between religion and politics, with a secular state, which disavows all particular religious values. However this is not the case. Religious values still inform the politics of the state, although collective action in the name of a particular religion is moved from common responsibility to personal responsibility. Religions may still work to transform society, but not because they control the political resources of the state, but rather because they pressure the state to provide goods and services to its citizens. Universal religions should honour the peculiar existence of human beings in their varied contexts. The positive functions of religion become stronger when its universal meanings are reformulated in local, regional and national contexts.

We need to locate the influence of formalism and fundamentalism as it occurred in the violence in the Moluccas, in a bigger picture of global change. The revival of fundamentalism is part of a reaction against globalisation. Secularism challenges the social values of religion in a community. Secular liberal values threaten even the tolerant contextualized versions of universal truth espoused by religions.[391] Islamic discourse strongly rejects secularism even as it seeks the empowerment of modern technology. It is quite likely that the material changes brought by technology have a more profound affect on Islamic societies than Western liberal secularism. Be that as it may, the pervasive impact of global capitalism on all aspects of life poses a profound threat to religiously committed ways of life. One response is to absolutize local beliefs as a defence against the

[391] According to Din Syamsudin, the fundamentalist movement has a temporal target because it reminds Islam of its critical function towards the state powers (Syamsudin : 1995b). At the national level, the role of the fundamentalists is to struggle for justice for the Islamic community when they are oppressed by the politics of the state. In Indonesia, the politics of the state oppressed the Islamic community and that created resistence (Al-Chaidar: 2000). Emad Eldin Shahin argues that Islamic resistance is inspired by a return to Islamic teachings in the *Qur'an* (Shahin: 1997). In this context, many people see the politics of Islam as intolerant and physically violent. However according to fundamentalist Muslims, mental violence through media and television is worse than violence to the body. The militancy of fundamentalists creates a counter attack that is also fundamentalist and also uses violence as a means of struggle. In the North Moluccas, mass violence occurred when two parties took basically fundamentalist positions. The problem became more acute with the involvement of people from outside the communities. Local *Laskar Jihad*, the national *Laskar Jihad* and the military combined to overcome the Christian communities who were accused of being followers of the Republic of South Moluccas (RMS). However, there was no historical connection between the people of the North Moluccas and the RMS movement in the Central Moluccas (see Chapter VI).

overwhelming speed of social and technological change (cf. Aldridge: 2000, 101).[392] In my opinion, religions do hold universal values that clash with the values of international capitalism, however universal values cannot be frozen into one particular cultural form. Nor can they be imposed from without on a multicultural, multireligious society.

8.4. Political Alternatives after the Violence: *Syari'ah* or Civil Society?

After the 1999-2000 violence, very few Christians remained in Ternate. Some Muslims began a movement to impose Islamic law (*Syari'ah*) as the source of law for Ternate. Actually the central government has responded positively to *Syari'ah* as law for governing religious practices. The government does not apply *Syari'ah* but allows Muslims to use *Syari'ah* to govern their own communities. The government ensures that *Syari'ah* religious regulations are not applied to all citizens, but only those who come under the jurisdiction of Islamic courts. Nevertheless many non-Muslims are quite concerned about this tendency towards "Islamisization" (*Islamisasi*), i.e. the spreading of Islamic influences throughout the society (Hefner: 1995a,21-46; Hefner: 2000). Under the New Order, this policy was applied to the obligations of Islamic faith (*Din*). The New Order government built many mosques, Islamic educational institutions, etc. However, at the same time, the New Order oppressed militant Islamic groups.

Islamic law (*Syari'ah*) is a religious obligation for all Muslims, but not for non-Muslims. However Muslim discourse is by no means unified on how far governmental coercive power should be used to uphold *Syari'ah*, even for Muslims. Surahman Hidayat explains that *Syari'ah* ensures the individual rights of non-Muslims, but is not clear about the political rights of non-Muslim as citizens. In conservative readings of *Syari'ah* Jews and Christians (*dzimmi*) have the right to protection, as long as they pay a tax, but are not citizens of the commonwealth and have no political rights. However neither the *Qur'an* nor the *Hadith* discuss the mechanisms of a modern state, such as the executive, judicative, and legislative functions of government (Hidayat: 2001, 6-23). If the function of law is to protect and unite all the citizens of a society, then Islamic law seems curiously inappropriate for a multicultural society. However some Muslim scholars argue that the universal teachings of *Qur'an* and *Hadith* can inspire the

[392] Bruce Lawrence insists that the various distinctions within the Muslim community appear in their dress, business and politics (Lawrence: 1998, 170-172). Sometimes the same distinctions can be seen among Christians, Hindus and Buddhists (Smith: 1974). Sometimes a community is called fundamentalist because of their extreme rejection of secularism. The almost universal influence of secularism through communication and media technologies not only changes the way people think but also their ideologies and their beliefs. Lawrence describes the revival of Islam in relation to the Western economy, politic hegemony and the influence of globalisation that already began in the period colonialism (Lawrence: 1998). The politics of Islam creates a new bargaining position in the context of the politics of free market capitalism. The politics of oil contributes to the tension between the Islamic world and Western countries. Arab politicians acknowledges that the nation states of the Islamic world are rich, but they are not wealthy (Shahin: 1997, 10). This interesting statement shows an awareness of the weakness of Arab nation states for bargaining on the world market, as well as their inability to create the products they use.

principles of law and justice that are consistent with constitutionalism and the universal declaration of human rights (An-Na'im: 1994a).

Muslims often argue for *Syari'ah* because they say Islam affects all of life and cannot be separated from politics. Religion and the state are one. This statement may be trued in theory but is hard to apply to a multicultural state. A multicultural state like Indonesia needs a government that can create justice for the whole nation, including those who are non-Muslim. The separation of Church and State in Western politics did not occur because the people thought religions had nothing to say to politics. The problem was that religions that universalised their particular forms and rituals often discriminated against citizens who did not use the same rituals and symbols. A state that, like Indonesia, is founded on the sovereignty of the people, must guarantee the equal rights of all its citizenships. Indonesia may not follow the Western doctrine of a complete separation of religion from politics, but should at least encourage the proper role of religion in building the character of all its citizens as tolerant people who can live together in peace, i.e. a civil society.

Aldridge distinguishes between the politics of religion and civil religion. The politics of religion describes how the state uses religious symbols and sacred rituals to form the political identity of its citizenships for the political interests of the regime (Aldridge: 2000, 157). The politics of religion uses a single religion as the foundation and official religion of the state. The symbols and ritual practices used in the politics of religion do not arise organically from the social relationships that are available in that particular society but are taken from a religion that transcends all particular societies. The state uses religion as an ideology that determines the characteristics of an individual in relation to the state. In contrast, Aldridge views civil religion as the sacralization of truths and commitments that transcend any particular religion. The essence of civil religion is to provide an inspiration to society and to build common commitment to truths that undergird the political institutions. Civil religion also provides for protesting against the state when it doesn't fulfil its mandate to uphold tolerant values such as basic human rights and religious freedom (Aldridge: 2000, 157).

Modern Indonesian law must find a delicate balance between local adat, religious law and rational, pragmatic laws that address the ever-changing needs and problems of society. Laws that discriminate between groups, especially on the basis of categories like majority and minority (Muslim and Non-Muslim), display elements of religious absolutism that preclude healthy negotiation to find the common good for society. Democratic government is based on negotiation and compromise, characteristic skills that are readily available in the everyday practices of the Indonesian people, not on imposition of an absolute ideology. Religions should shift their emphasis from imposing particular "vertical" rituals oriented to God, to encouraging "horizontal" values of justice and peaceful relations with others. A shift of emphasis towards humanistic religious values does not imply the loss of the sacred but rather the inclusion of the sacred in everyday life. All religions can inspire a deep respect for all human beings. However such universal religious values are easily subverted when religion

becomes a tool of power for forcing one version of the "truth" on everyone else. A politics of religion that resorts to violence in order to defend "the truth" wounds the soul of religion that is committed to peace and justice.

A commitment to democratic principles and the politics of negotiation and exchange, should not be equated with "Neoliberalism." Liberal democratic societies of the wealthy capitalistic nation-states are neither the models nor the examples that Indonesian law must follow. The world economic system is deeply unjust and favours the rich nations and the capitalist elites within countries like Indonesia. Neoliberalism breaks down all trade barriers and forces poor countries, and the poor within those countries, to compete on a "level playing field" with the rich and powerful. The result is an increasing gap between the rich and the poor. Even the freedom of speech is not an absolute value, especially in a context where the rich and powerful control all the media of communication. Market mechanisms do not result in justice but only in the suppression of all voices that do not support the dominant elites. True negotiation requires a free press but a free press need not be defined as a press that is enslaved to the marketplace and unrestrained by a social conscience. Neoliberalism sometimes leads to the suffering and exploitation of the poor, as seen in the agricultural transformation of the village of Ngidiho (see Chapters III, VI and VII).

8.5. Religion, Ideology and Politics

The present system of nation-states is a product of colonialism, globalisation and modernisation. The modern nation-state exists within a system that maintains the hegemony of Western capitalism. It is not easy for a former colony to build a democratic society that is appropriate for the local context. However, even though social structures that were shaped by colonialism influence the current shape of society, it is still the indigenous people who will determine their own future (see Chapter IV and V). In Chapter II I describe the relationship between the Protestant Reformation and the appearance of the modern nation-state. The nation state arose in Western Europe before the American Revolution created a new model of democratic freedom. The Protestant Reformation shaped a nation-state that emphasized the interaction between religion and territory. In contrast, the new nation-state in America, in principle (although not always in practice), denied the relevancy of ethnicity or religion in the formation of state territory (see Benjamin: 1988).

According to Henry, the Preamble to the Constitution of the United States of America was based on the religious spirit of the Puritans (Henry: 1979). This Preamble recognizes the role of religious belief in state politics. However the state does not support any particular religion but rather encourages a generalized civil religion. In Indonesia, both *Pancasila* and the Preamble to the Constitution (*UUD 1945*) recognize the power of God, not only in Islam but also in other religions. The recognition of "the Great Unity of Deity" (*Ketuhanan yang Maha Esa*) reflects the Indonesian people's general commitment to monotheism.[393]

[393] In America, God is generally equated with the God of Israel and the Christian tradition (see Henry: 1979, ix). Robert Bellah states that the revelation of Qur'an to the prophet Muhammad

In the history of the Indonesian Constitution, a single phrase requiring all Muslims to obey Islamic law (*Syari'ah*) was first proposed and then deleted. The abolition of this phrase, known as the Jakarta Charter, as well as of other provisions, such as that the President must be a Muslim, is based on the understanding that the state should not legalise a single religion for its citizens (see Chapter V). The Indonesian state does require that its citizens believe in One God. The belief in the great Oneness of God unifies an Indonesian identity that transcends the great diversity of religions and beliefs. Andrée Feillard describes the political compromises that led to the abolition of the Jakarta Charter on the 22nd of June 1945. These compromises were possible due to the role of the NU Party. However, Feillard also shows that NU's later doubts about Pancasila were related to Suharto's use of Pancasila along with Javanese Ritual to maintain his power (Feillard: 1997, see Chapter V). Thus Feillard argues that NU's deemphasis on Pancasila was prompted by suspicion of Suharto's political agenda regarding succession and did not indicate a rejection of Pancasila as the ideology of the state.

After Suharto was pushed out of office, there was an urgent movement to delegitimize Pancasila. This movement was part of the crisis atmosphere brought on by the economic collapse. The economic crisis hit the middle classes like a ton of bricks and many slid below the poverty line. According to Hefner, the middle class in Indonesia tends to be *santri* (pious Muslims). In the pressure of the economic crisis, the pattern of rhetoric among the *santri* shifted from "substantialist" Islam to "formalism" and "fundamentalism". A similar shift in rhetoric also took place in other religions, such as Christianity. Most Indonesians view religion as a vital element in determining public welfare (Hefner: 1995a, 38). Therefore, when things go badly there is a duel tendency to think that a stricter, more formalistic commitment to one's own religion may bring safety, and to become suspicious of other religions as the cause of the calamity.

Hefner shows how democratic principles are a vital part of "Civil Islam" in Indonesia. Indonesia's struggle to deal with secularisation, foreign ideologies and global economic competition are testing the development of civil Islam. Nevertheless, civil Islam has become the dominant discourse about the nation-state of Indonesia (Hefner: 2000). None of the political parties that compete in Indonesia are really secular parties because all acknowledge the Pancasila principle of the great unity of deity. However there is a distinct division between parties that explicitly or implicitly use Islam as their primary political rhetoric and those who do not. Prior to the 2004 elections, explicitly Islamic parties have not fared well with the electorate.

Islam in Indonesia is different from Islam in other countries. For example, Michael Hitchcock describes how Islam in Eastern Indonesia, in particular Bima, adjusted to the local context. Islamic practices in Bima respect the kinship traditions and the material context prior to the arrival of Islam. As a result, Muslim religion in Bima is unique and not simply a reflection of the Islamic

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does not use the term Allah as Father or King. Rather Allah is similar to Yahweh, the God of the Jews (Bellah: 1970, 82-83, 95-96, 149).

religion that came from Arabia or India (Hichcock: 1988, 4). In the context of the North Moluccas, justice is at the core of religious teaching. In the everyday life of the people, fair practices of exchange are a fundamental part of religion. These values inspired the labourers to fight for their rights. For example, the traditional practice of providing food for all labourers, in addition to their salary, led the people to reject the Banana Company's policy of denying rice to women labourers on the ground that they would get rice from their husbands.

Bahtiar Effendi argues that the principles of universal Islam are tolerant and pay attention to humanitarian rights (Effendi: 1995, 1-19, cf. Price: 1999, 137-156). Nurcholish Madjid echoes this view. Madjid insists that *Qur'an* does not codify that a state has to apply Islamic Law. Both Effendi and Madjid suggest that in its political aspect, Islam should focus more on nation building and building a civil society in Indonesia rather than founding an explicitly Islamic state. Madjid prefers to translate civil society as *masyarakat madina*, thereby underlining his conviction that the society that Muhammad built in the city of Medina was a truly civil society. Madjid argues that the principles of tolerance, equality and justice applied to all peoples, tribes, ethnic groups and religions that lived together in Medina (Madjid, as discussed in Hidayat: 2000).[394] However Madjid has been criticized for idealizing Medina and substituting a law-based, top-down concept of civil society in place of the idea of autonomous mediating institutions whose freedom is guaranteed by basic human rights.[395]

Intellectual debates by moderate, liberal or "post-liberal" Muslims about the nature of civil society are a far cry from the political agenda of more radical Islamic parties who want to transform all of Indonesia into the *Dar al Islam*, the territory of the *ummah*. According to Syamsuddin, the agenda of Muslim parties to create an Islamic state rests on an inadequate interpretation of the *Qur'an* (Syamsuddin: 1995b). Unfortunately Syamsuddin does not show us how to carry out an historically critical interpretation of the holy book. Kamali suggests that the conception of *dawlat Islamiyyah* assumes that the population of the state includes both Muslims and non-Muslims who need not be differentiated in carrying out the commandments of the *Qur'an,* namely doing good and attacking

[394] Ann L. S. Lambton in her research about state and government in the Middle Ages of Islam concluded that the Constitution of Madinah framed the concept of *ummah*. The word *Ummah* means a community that is equal. There is no difference of existence but only different functions in the community. God is the head of the community and his orders are given directly. Islam teaches that through the prophet Muhammad Muslims can achieve the essence of *Ummah*. The purpose of the *ummah* is to teach how human beings have to live with respect and fear of God in preparation to face his judgment before entering heaven (Lambton: 1985 [1981]). The perspective of Madjid and Lambton are close to the opinion of Roberth Bellah. Bellah use of Rousseau's term "civil religion" shows that religion cannot be separated from politics because the people who govern are also those who believe (Bellah: 1970; Gehrig: 1979). However, the law that ties the religious people cannot be used as the law of state. Wilbur Zelinsky discusses how American nationalism interweaves different layers of cultural symbols and religion in the society and ties them together as a civil religion (Zelinsky: 1998). Allan Aldridge quotes Gellner who states that in the future, world politics will not be separated from the creation of collective rituals that can tie together different societies that have different ethnic groups, religions and social classes (Aldrige: 2000, 64).

[395] See (Ahmad Baso:1999).

evil. The focus of this Qur'anic conception is known as *hisbah* and it is bigger than *Syari'ah* that emphasizes the territory *Dar-al–Islam* (Kamali: 1994, 50).

Muslim discourse on *Syari'ah* in Indonesia is still confused and inconsistent. On the one hand, some argue that non-Muslims need not worry since *Syari'ah* only applies to Muslims and not to non-Muslims. On the other hand there are frequent assertions that *Syari'ah* is universal and should be applied to all. In my opinion, neither of these two approaches answers the question of how an officially Muslim state will guarantee the political rights of non-Muslim citizens. Frequent assertions that non-Muslims would enjoy complete freedom of worship according their religion are not reassuring, since freedom of religion does not guarantee equal political and civil rights for all citizens (see Chapter VII).

Syari'ah was created in the dynasty of Umayyad when the *ummah* was already formed in Medina (Lambton: 1985, 2-3). *Syari'ah* is not a single law book analogous to the tradition of Roman law in the West. Rather *Syari'ah* is a discussion about the obligations of faith (*Din*). It addresses all aspects of personal and public life, such as family, health, social structure, conflict, business, and politics (Lambton: 1985, 2). Therefore the acceptance of *Syari'ah* aims at integrating all Muslims into the *Ummah*. In Indonesia, many aspects of *Syari'ah* have already been incorporated into the law.

However, most of Islamic political parties feel that using Islamic symbols in the political arena without gaining power in the structure of government is not consistent. They see Islam as a political force that should politically benefit its followers. Islamic politics should result in the public application of *Syari'ah*. In my opinion, the politics of religious rhetoric in Indonesia is part of a political transition in Indonesia in which religious symbols are used to create a clear distinction from the former regime. Some parts of the Muslim community feel the need for *Syari'ah* to be imposed as national law. They need to become more aware of the need for openness in interpreting *Syari'ah* so that it can adjust to the complexity of the present society. For example, in a recent survey, a large majority of Muslims favoured the implementation of *Syari'ah* in Indonesia. However an equally large majority stated that they do not agree with punishing theft by cutting off the guilty party's hand.[396] During the political transition in Indonesia, Islamic parties are still searching for forms in which their religious ideals can be recognized in the body of Indonesian politics.[397]

In Chapter V I explained how different groups have used a politics of rhetoric in different stages of the transformation of national politics without replacing the ideology of Pancasila and UUD 1945. In the 1950's, Kahin argued that Pancasila was the best possible synthesis of different universal values such as Islam, Western democracy, village democracy, the communal ideals of Indonesia and even the basic principles of Marxism (Kahin: 1952, 123). However we are now in a new situation in which the political rhetoric that aims to replace the old ideology

[396] This survey from the Center for Population Studies of Gadjah Mada University, was cited at the Journal of Anthropology Conference held in Denpasar, Bali in July, 2002.
[397] cf. (An-Na'im: 1994a, 20).

of the state, has to be located in the bigger context of global Islam after end of the Cold War, the collapse of Communism and the hegemony of Western capitalism. The global Islamic movement can be seen as a means to bring down outmoded feudal leaderships within Muslim countries (see Kepel: 1993; Price: 1999). In the case of Indonesia, there is an effort to transform the nation-state after the collapse of Suharto (see Chapter V). If Pancasila is to survive, the government must separate the ideology of Pancasila from the politics of integralism that was promoted by Supomo. The "integralist state" eliminated all opposition in the name of an indivisible national unity that was institutionalised under the Old Order and the New Order. This book argues that principles of democracy that permit diversity are available in the practices of the common people in Galela. The model of ritual negotiation and exchange is more democratic and egalitarian than the outmoded politics of imperial domination that has been practiced by the Netherlands, Japan and Java (see Chapter VII).

In Indonesia, *Reformasi* claimed to empower civil society and remove the military from politics. Unfortunately the reality was quite different. The military used fundamentalist forces to create instability that delegitimized the government and forced a continued dependence on the military to provide basic safety. As a result of the economic crisis, money politics became the norm rather than the exception. Competing elites could easily mobilize factions in society by giving them money to vote for a particular candidate or to carry out demonstrations against their rivals (see Chapter V). In the power vacuum following Suharto's fall, competing groups ritualised economic and political conflicts by using ethnic or religious symbols and practices. Rituals mobilized the people to engage in violence, but also became a tool to lead them to reconciliation.

This dissertation does not argue for the elimination of religion from politics, which is impossible in any case in Indonesia. In fact religion can be a critical voice in limiting the pretensions of the state, just as the state can be a critical factor in restraining religious groups that want to impose their own convictions on everyone else. Religion and nationalism are at their best when they dialogue about how best to defend the weak and correct injustice. Together they give hope in the struggle for political reform. Indonesia needs to build political structures that create free and safe space for bargaining between different interest groups. Religious and ethnic rhetoric are dangerous weapons, especially if they are combined with nationalistic rhetoric that excludes certain groups from parts of the national territory. The state, as a neutral arbitrator should professionally guarantee equality, justice and dignity for all groups within the nation state of the Republic of Indonesia.

8.6. Closing Remarks

After the violence of 1999 – 2000, stability and safety is the most important political agenda in the North Moluccas. Stability depends on both the society and the government in the region. Government and society live in an ongoing dialectic: negotiating their respective tasks for maintaining security in the region. Negotiations are unlikely to succeed unless they are conducted in trust and

respect. On the other hand, trust and respect are not enough. They must be supplemented with realistic restraints on those who would extend their power by appealing to selective historical memories and powerful religious symbols. The constellation of power in the North Moluccas has changed resulting in new temptations for those who came out on top. However at least some of the common people of Halmahera are now wary of religious or ethnic rhetoric as a means of political mobilization.

The history of society in the North Moluccas is usually related from the perspective of Kings, Sultans and imperial powers. However, after the violence of 1999-2000 the people are more aware of their own power to engage in war or reconciliation. The common people are trying to reformulate the relationships between different ethnic and religious groups based on justice, using the principles of exchange as a starting point. The government cannot create peace, but it can empower negotiation and exchange by at least guaranteeing a minimum level of safety for all groups. The government failed to promote peace in the period leading up to the violence. This dissertation does not suggest that a single "*dalang*" or provocateur, whether from inside or outside the government was the primary cause of the violence. However it is clear that power struggles at a national level contributed to the violence and the government's inability to limit the suffering of the people.

Cultural factors, such as ritual, should not be separated from economic and political factors in both creating and resolving violent conflict. Rituals of exchange include religious, cultural, economic and political elements that cannot be separated from each other. This dissertation is neither "Weberian" in arguing for predominantly cultural influences on social change, nor "Marxist" in arguing for the dominance of material causes. Rather I think cultural and material causes cannot and should not be separated from each other. Material things, like land, have no meaning apart from culture and religion, while cultural and religious practices are always related to material conditions. Efforts to prevent or resolve future conflicts should consider the rich cultural resources of the common people for resolving political, social and economic problems.

This dissertation shows how ethnic territories are formed within the national borders. The historical research in this book shows how the discourse about territory changes to reflect new power realities in the region and the nation at large. The people's connection with their land is a powerful force that stimulates extreme emotions when threatened. The build up to the violence in Galela was not just the immediate causes related to competition between the Kao and the Makian or the Tobelo and the Galela. It also included the mounting frustration of people who had lost their land to global agro business. The economic crisis and the political power vacuum added to the people's anxiety.

People who faithfully practiced their particular religions while still remaining loyal to their ancestors as the primary owners of their land, continued to work for peace. However when the people became convinced that one religion, or the other, was planning to take over, the whole area erupted in violence. A

counterfeit letter provided "proof" that Christians were intent on taking over the region. From the opposite side, the regional government's support of the Makians' bid to take over the area of the gold mine in the land of Kao seemed to substantiate the suspicion that the Muslims wanted to take total control of the new province. Competing territorial claims combined with religious rhetoric to divide the society and convince the people that they had to kill or be killed. This study provides insight into the processes leading up to violence in the hopes that the state may learn to play a more positive role in preventing violence by protecting the common people from attempts to take over their land or impose an alien religion.

During the process of reconciliation, the people deemphasized religious exclusivism, which was prominent as an ideology for creating conflict. The common practices related to historical claims of having common ancestors provided a united ritual to bring people together in peaceful negotiation. Family or clan rituals provided a method of reconciliation, which was strengthened by religious legitimation as each party took oaths in the name of God to keep their commitments to their former enemies. The common people are already a civil society that can imbue rituals with new meaning to support the common good.

However, in the national level, the negotiations between religion and politics are not over in Indonesia. Suharto used religion as a means of legitimacy. Not much has changed. During the presidency of Abdurrahman Wahid, the President was the former head of NU, the Head of the MPR (parliament) was the former head of Muhammadiyah while the head of DPR (legislature) was the former head of HMI. These are the three most influential religious institutions in Indonesia. Religion is a powerful force for both good and evil, oppression and liberation. Many people are now tired of religion as a tool of power. Yet many others look to religion as an alternative to the cynical and corrupt developmentalism of the past. Whether or not religion will play a positive role in leading Indonesia out of the crises of the past into a more just and peaceful society is still an open question. The answer to this question may depend on how skilfully the common people re-enact the rituals of exchange in search of a new balance that is acceptable to all parties.

Chapter IX
Conclusion

The Moluccas today still experience the aftermath of the violence of 1999. It is like the history of Indonesia which cannot be separated from the 1965 tragedy when many were killed as part of the anti-communist movement by New Order forces. Violence began in Ambon in January 1999 and spread to the North Moluccas in December 1999. In this book I have analysed the dynamics of this conflict in a wider framework of the transformation that the district of Galela went through in a contemporary history.

As these events unfolded, I was in the village of Ngidiho in North Halmahera doing my Ph.D. research on the impact of globalization in the region. I watched the growing violence in the region and observed how these tension were ritualized through political symbols and rhetoric. This caused a drastic change in the direction of my research. I focused on the roles of rituals as powerful mechanism both in creating solidarity and in aggravating conflict. I chose to use ritual as a point of entry and a tool of analysis to counter the popular view of the civil war as being primarily a religious conflict.

As an analytical lens, ritual helps to understand the ways in which people cope with community life and with the politico-economic changes that their community underwent. It turned out that ritual can both intensify and reconciliate a conflict. As a solidarity mechanism, ritual unites and mobilizes people. Ritual can rally the the people against real or perceived outsiders and also can help them achieve agreement after confrontation. When used in conflict, ritual is a means to mobilize people to oppose existing power structures which are seen as a threat or to fight other groups seen as pursuing opposite interests.

Rituals are practices which give meaning to solidarity, starting at the family level and moving up to associations, neighbourhoods, villages, districts, provinces and countries. In this book I define ritual as dynamic practices, that are guided and informed by ideology, memories and customs, that are reshaped as needed to meet the needs of the present. These practices are usually highly symbolic and embody sacred values to give weight and strength to the present actions. These values are expressed through words, actions, gestures, myths, symbols etc.. Ritual practices consolidate and restore a sense of belonging to a community, but if this community falls apart through conflict, the same practices can be used to create solidarity within opposing factions, just as they were used to create antagonism between the different parties.

I was privileged to live with the Ngidiho people during their struggle before and after the violence. This gave me a unique perspective on the events. I built my analysis from everyday practices of the Ngidiho people which provided material resources to reconstruct their social history. My own ethnographic accounts are the main instruments for examining the present practices of the people. I trace the oral history of the people by observing their present practices together with their

own interpretation. With this approach, I try to present village life as seen through the eyes of the people. Then I carefully examined both primary and secondary sources in order to understand the interpretations and assumptions of other researchers in the region.

In the everyday practices of the Ngidiho people, ritual plays an important role. People harmonize themselves with nature through ritual. Ritual does not only structure the human life cylce but also mediates between people as they pass through crises in their families, clans and political relationships. Ritual functions as a mediating "language" that facilitates the negotiation of power. Ritual formulates ideolo gy and material conditions into concrete actions and uses sacred meanings to legitimize the decisions they reach together. For the Ngidiho people, sacred meanings originate with their common ancestors. Their ancestors are transformed into good spirits who are expected to protect their clans and villages and may even be seen as a source of salvation.

However these traditional beliefs are transformed and partly obliterated by the impact of global change and the arrival of new religions which insist on replacing the ancestors with God as the source of the sacred. The dynamics between material changes and everyday practices of the community in Ngidiho led to ideological changes in the politics of ritual. Modernization of agriculture created new structures within the kin-networks and changed living patterns. Sometimes within the same material context, several different concepts are used to explain the same meanings. For example, the meaning of local religious practices are adapted to fit to Islamic and Christian doctrines, but without losing their old meanings as well.

The transformation of the economic and ecological contexts in Galela led to a reformulation of social and cultural customs. The change in the material base of society forced the people to rewrite the basic concepts about what they do in their everyday lives. Still, the gap between the older generation and younger generation hinders the reformulation of ideology in the cultural practices of society.

Sometimes there are policies that show inequality between different groups in society. The Galela marriage rituals illustrate a model of ritualized exchange in which different parties negotiatie their position in the community by exchanging labour, services and various kinds of wealth. The system is designed to maintain trust and equality in the society. The Galela practice gift exchange primarily in relations with people from outside their nuclear family. In Ngidiho, relationships between siblings should be unconditional. However relationships with other people are conditional. Marriage is a major way to extend kin ties and community relations. The people of Ngidiho accept foreigners and strangers into their families through marriage because they believe that an exchange of blood via marriage also strengthens their existence as spirits after death. The goal of their spiritual transformation after death is to become one of the ancestral spirits (*o diliki*).

Solidarity is a central ingredient of the Ngidiho people's efforts to further expand their networks. The practice of generalized exchange in Galela, such as *jojobo* is

like a revolving fund system, to help each family meet the high costs of the primary rituals in the life cycle. *Jojobo* extends relations of mutual help and marriage bonds. *Jojobo* makes others to become part of one's family. When people do not engage in the ritual practice of exchange, they are seen as enemies of the community; they disturb the mechanisms that include them in a process of giving and receiving.

Life practices of the Galela should be seen in their totality. Exchange is a ritual practice that is found in all aspects of the Galela people's life, including the economic, religious and political domains. Ideally the practices of exchange promote solidarity and acknowledge both the economic and spiritual needs that form the basic identity of the people in Ngidiho.

Practices of exchange do not guarantee either justice or balance within a society if there is severe inequality. The Banana Company strengthened the economic infrastructure by bringing new technology and skills to Galela. However at the same time, it took away people's land causing major opposition from the farmers and others who demanded adequate compensation. During the conflict, the politics of ritual mobilized the people of Galela, structurally linking their local problems with regional, national and international ideologies that tapped into their traditions and religion. Religious identity polarized people who were linked by ties of kinship, co-residence, and culture. Before these conflict came into the open, tensions within and between families were addressed through ritual which served as mechanisms to bring people together. The wedding party that I described in the early part of this book is a reflection on how ritual action functioned amidst local tensions.

Analysis of ritual action requires that we understand how rituals function within a larger context of the ongoing negotiations for power and position. A "thick description" narrates the conditions and reasons behind the event. The desciption doesn't mean to separate ritual action as a political event from ritual as a cultural performance. The narraton is only a tool for understanding that the total meaning of a ritual action includes both the ideology it expresses and the material conditions which it negotiates. These two aspects cannot be separated.

In this study I examine the tensions between different groups' material interests, which influenced the formation of particular political rituals. Colonial competition for a trade monopoly employed competing ideologies, which aimed to formalise the identity of the society in order to control its population and exploit its resources. Two methods were employed in the politics of trade. First, the colonialists appealed to material interests based on the rational subjectivity of the people. Secondly, they tried to mould the people's spiritual subjectivity to enhance loyalty. Changes in the macro political economy transformed the villages in the District of Galela.

Religion and ritual provide ways to build collective identity. Religion creates coalitions against the enemies of the community based on shared values. Often the people accepted and modified outside institutions of power as a means of

increasing their knowledge but without engaging in depth with its ideology. Sometimes feudal relations based on ancient ties, such as the authority of the Sultan of Ternate, were radically changed by the intrusion of a new power from outside through trade. Religious loyalty tied the society together in the North Moluccas but was always influenced by competition for trade. In Halmahera the spread of Islam and Christianity occurred slowly at the end of the 19th century. Although the Sultan of Ternate was a Muslim who helped to form the political identity of Halmahera, this did not occcur smoothly because his policies were often oppressive to the local people. Indigenous groups that felt oppressed by the Sultan tended to retain their tribal religion or convert to Christianity. However, the most profound relationship between religion and politics began in Halmahera when religious identity was required as a part of political identity before the first parliamentary elections in 1955. The people in Ngidiho were forced to convert to Islam or Christianity before they could vote.

During the post-colonial period in the Moluccas, the central government in Jakarta tried to control the political loyalty of the Moluccan people by creating coalitions based on old ties of political loyalty. For example, Golkar employed the Sultan of Ternate to become an elite cadre. The last election before Suharto stepped down shows that the Golkar party opened the door for the Sultan of Ternate to return to regional power. The Sultan revitalized the historical memories of the region. Political rituals enlivened national and regional power struggles and the power dynamics electrified political rituals.

National politics deeply affected the regional politics of the North Moluccas. The separation of the North Moluccas from the province of the Moluccas sharpened the old competition among the four kingdoms in the area. It reinvented the bitter political rivalry between Ternate and Tidore who used the Kao and Makians to stake out their differing claims to the ancient Kingdom of *Maluku-Kie-Raha*. The political transformation among the regional elites drove the people to divide into different groups that distinguished themselves from each other through their history of loyalties, religions and sub-ethnicities. When the interests became great and the conflict could not longer be managed wisely, the common people of Northen Halmahera had to pay the price in their own blood.

In Halmahera, it is clear that riots were not just the result of the local people's will. National politics transformed regional power struggles over control of local natural resources. Political instability then provided an opportunity to attempt to defend territories or the borders of an area. The bureacractic elite used violence to enforce their will and made the people defend themselves. The only means of defence was through direct participation in the war. Political rituals swept people up in an overwhelming movement that forced them to go to war. In Ngidiho, it can be concluded that rituals mobilized the masses to commit themselves to violent action. The local media, innuendos and rumours about black magic created the illusion of predestined violence. A counterfeit letter created a discourse of fear, suggesting that there were plans for Christian domination of the whole territory.

Many people faithfully practiced their particular religions while still remaining loyal to their ancestors as the primary owners of the land. They continued to work for peace. However when people became convinced that one religion or the other was planning to take over, the whole area erupted in violence. The counterfeit letter provided "proof" that Christians were intent on taking over the region. Similar fears arose among the Christians, fed by rumours and the government supported bid for the Makians to take over the area of the gold mine in Kao. Religious rhetoric sharpened the conflict and convinced many people that they had to kill or be killed. The analysis of the subsequent violence in this book provides insight into the processes leading up to violence.

The people defended themselves at two levels. First, among the common people, those who had formerly lived together in peace attacked and murdered each other. In doing so, people had to free themselves from family and kinship networks. To justify their actions the people employed a new synthesis combining universal religious identity with local, ancestral rituals that strengthened their structures of power and claims to the truth. This stimulated them to commit violent acts. Ritual gave sacred legitimacy to their actions, promised invulnerability to their bodies and clarity against the ambiguity of their identity and status (cf Douglas: 1988 [1966], 103-104).

Secondly, at the level of the bureacratic elite in Ternate and in Tobelo, leaders of each group publised books and articles that aimed to give a rational explanation that would justify the warfare in which they were involved. These books and articles developed a political discourse that rewrote the history of their groups and religion, claiming a uniqueness over other group and religions that has been passed down from their ancestors. These interpretations of history lack internal consistency but reveal a social discourse that is gauged in new global terms.

There can be no doubt that "memory" from before and after the riots is one of the important factors that influences conflict and its resolution. Memory also determines how we see division in a society. Bauman shows how memories formed social class in England at the end of the 18-century (Bauman: 1982). He says that memory functions to continue history. Memory makes history alive. Societies need a living history in their efforts to understand the meaning of change from an old environment to a new one (Bauman: 1982, 3). Memory is crusial in keeping people together, but at the same time people reconstruct their memories. Human beings forget a bitter history when it can no longer help them to survive the social changes they face. After the violence, a new history was written to give legitimacy to a new reality. This revision of memories may serve a political purpose but at the grass roots level, people try to understand bitter events by relating their experience to their religious or traditional beliefs.

For example, some people explained the violence as the result of Satan tempting human beings. The people objectified the violence by using the word "disaster" to efface the painful memories of their own participation and construct the violence as something similar to what happens in nature. Sometimes human beings can transcend disaster in this way, but sometimes they cannot. The history that lives in

the memory of communities is not a single, fixed conceptualisation. Historical memories are open to adjustment as people have to face new and changing situations by reflecting on the ideas and practices that are available in their tradition. The people process the history of their ethnic groups and religions in order to recreate their memories of the society in North Moluccas as we have seen in the specific example of the Ngidiho people.

The physical borders of ethnic history that were not clear before in December 1999 became clear after the conflict. Ethnic identity was equated with religious identity. Ethnic groups construct both secular and messianic national ideologies to sustain an imagined identity and inspire the political struggle of their people (cf Anderson: 1999). Political labelling based on antagonistic religious loyalties resulted in sharp divisions in the society. People became divided by ethnicity, religion and descent. In the North Moluccas, boundaries between people are not only imaginary but also a physical reality. Religious rituals include taboos for one community that are not binding for outsiders of the belief. Ideological taboos shaped the physical separation of the Christian's houses from the Muslims in Ngidiho. For example, the Christians raised pigs and allowed them to wander free. This caused the Muslims to physically separate themselves from the Christians. During the conflict, the refugees also created geographical boundaries according to religion. Muslim refugees fled to Ternate and Tidore while Christian refugees escaped to Tobelo (Northern Halmahera) and Manado-Bitung in North Sulawesi.

Imagined religious identities that are constructed by violence threaten the identity of common people. However, when people are isolated from each other by physical threats their physical segregation may only continue as long as the physical danger persists. The people search for free space in social relationships with any party that does not threaten them. They free themselves from the limitations of imagined space that were created by their different political identities and negotiate renewed relationships through economic exchange based on assumptions of equality.

After the conflict the refugees reoriented themselves to their place of origin rather than to their religious identity. Christian refugees from North Moluccas emphasised their identity and solidarity with Halmahera. Muslim refugees identified themselves more specifically as from Ternate, Tidore, or another particular district. The process of reorientation illustrates the potential strength of original location that can be recognized in different groups. Affirmation of identity from their original location is a process that can assist the process of reconciliation in North Moluccas based on common socio-cultural practices, because as Juliet Peteet says: "location is only a beginning in the struggle of identity formation" (Peteet: 2000, 183). Identification with a particular location is often related to political legitimacy. Generally, identity is expressed by referring to the centre of the region from which the person comes (cf Anderson: 1999).

However, in the case of the refugees from North Moluccas who stayed in both North Sulawesi and Ternate–Tidore, their identity is linked firstly with their

ownership of land rather than their political location. Refugees from North Moluccas, who fled to North Sulawesi, call themselves Halmaherans. Why don't they identify themselves as people of Ternate where the centre of government is located? One reason is that during the violence in 1999–2000 there was no political or security protection from the regional government in Ternate. On the other hand, they do not call themselves Minahasans (people of North Sulawesi). People who identify themselves as Minahasan tend to stay and to work in the region. However most refugees cannot complete in the Minahasa labour market and do not identify themselves as Minahasans. Their identity, is rooted in their material context and expressed in their political struggles. Three elements can be seen in this. First, their identity is related to their struggle to return to their original home. Secondly, their rights as Halmaherans are linked to the land that they inherited from their ancestors on the island of Halmahera and not in Ternate or Tidore. Thirdly, their land is the place where they still hope to actualise their potential.

The refugees who fled to Ternate also made claims of political identity. Muslim refugees in Ternate chose to identify themselves as people from Galela, Loloda, and Tobelo rather than more generally as Halmaherans. During the period of violence the jihad troops were organised at district levels. During the conflict the Muslims identified themselves by district. Among the Muslim refugees, the claim of identity according to ethnicity took a new meaning after the violence was over and they returned to their home villages. Identity based on ethnicity and being indigenous to a particular district gave them leverage to oppose efforts by newcomers to take over the land that was left behind by Christian refugees. Muslim Galelans protected their Christian neighbours' lands against illegal claims made by people from other islands or districts. In Galela, the participants in the violence came from the regional and national Islamic Jihad. After the Christians were expelled from Galela, Islamic Jihad members from other islands attempted to seize the Christians' lands. However, Muslim Galelans protected the land of their Christian neighbours from outsiders.

Paying attention to the way the people identified themselves after the violence, it can be concluded that their identity is related to both ownership of the land and the new context in which they wish to remain. Some groups tried to manipulate land ownership by categorising someone's identity by religion and appealing to the name of Allah. Both the Muslims who remained on their land and the Christian refugees called themselves Halmaherans as a sign of solidarity with the whole indigenous population, both Muslim and Christian. Both Christians who remained in their original homes and Muslim refugees, used more localized ethnic identity as a means of asserting their right to the land. This shows that members of both religious communities still have a strong identity based on land and rooted in local traditions.

Material facts stimulated the people to find or restore ancient meanings that legitimise their right to the land. For example they acccepted the ancestral territory of *tona ma langi* as the place for beginning the process of reconciliation. Genealogical myths and rituals from their ancestral traditions provided orientation

for entering the process of negotiating reconciliation. In the process they recognised that their ethnic identities were strengthened by religious practices. The people combined elements from the traditions of their ancestors with religious practices to purify their broken relationships that occured during the violence. Common ethnic ancestors united people. But they also appealed to their common kinship with all human beings as taught by their religions. People created a modified ritual to meet new material conditions within their relationships. As trust grows, Christians and Muslims continue to rebuild their relationships by visiting each other and engaging in basic economic negotiations of ritual exchange of their surplus products. Non-governmental organisations helped to facilitate the process of reconciliation through providing the primary needs of the refugees such as housing. Using family ties that transcend religious barriers, non-profit organisations empowered the refugees to give exchange services for building each other's family houses. Muslims built Christians' houses and vise versa. The local government, played an important role in providing a neutral position, which could support the process of reconciliaiton.

Reconciliation allowed a return to open and fair economic activities but also required a collective ritual of forgetting and the creation of a new, regional solidarity (cf. Gulliver: 1979, 16). This collective ritual is a combination of religious and ethnic rituals, and both are important. The people reinterpreted their ethnic symbols to integrate them with their religious rituals. They located their religious rituals within the context of ethnic particularity. The people of Galela, Tobelo and the North Moluccas, succesfully interpreted their universal values within particular cultural contexts. This enabled them to creat a new understanding of themselves and their communities after the violence of December 1999.

Collective rituals serve a means of negotiation that can empower modern society in the North Moluccas and Indonesia. The practice of ritual exchange is also used by the state. Indonesian is still struggling to build vital collective rituals for the common good. Cultural factors, such as ritual, should not be separated from economic and political factors in both creating and resolving violent conflict. Rituals of exchange include religious, cultural, economic and political elements that cannot be separated from each other. The historical research in this book shows how the discourse about territory changes to reflect new power realities in the region and the nation at large. The people's connection with their land is a powerful force that stimulates extreme emotions when threatened. The build up to the violence in Galela was not just the immediate causes related to competition between the Kao and the Makian or the Tobelo and the Galela. It also included the mounting frustation of people who had lost their land to global agro business. The national economic crisis and the political power vacuum following Suharto's fall, added to the people's anxiety.

During the process of reconciliation, the people deemphasized religious exclusivism, which was prominent as an idelogy for creating conflict. The people revitalised an ideology of reconciliation that combined religious teaching, ethnic rituals and the ongoing practices of economic exchange. There is an urgent need

to develop exchange rituals across ethnic lines. This is underlined by the claim of trans-ethnic Indonesian identity that applies to all citizens and gives everyone the right to stay openly anywhere in Indonesian territory. Widespread migration, both from outside and inside the North Moluccas is a fact of modern life. New settlers are forced to develop exchange relationships with the indigenous inhabitants. Little by little they can build solidarity that transcends the relations of family, clan, and tribe in the local place where they stay together as neighbours of the same Indonesian people.

Ritual mediates and negotiates power by uniting material concern with ideology. Rituals in the North Moluccas establish a link between the macrocosmic world of symbolic meanings and the microcosmic world of every day life, by drawing from a long historical memory. When the ritual negotiations do not work out, ritual can become the stimulus for violence. Ritual mediates transition, not only in the human lifecycle but also in crisis transitions of a particular society. Ritual links the past with the present lives of the people.

The attempt to create an integrated Indonesian state is confronted with the large gap between middle class-intelectuals and common people. Another kind of gap lies between different ethnic and religious groups. After colonialism, the Indonesian leadership created national rituals to bridge socio-cultural differences and serve the particular political agendas of local groups. Sukarno was a master at ritualizing his style of administration. Political parties competed by using symbols, myths and ideological discourse. Under the New Order and in the present reformation period Indonesian politics continues to be saturated with rituals. The government reinforces its political projects by the use of symbols. When negotiation is blocked, violence becomes a means of determining political directions. Following the collapse of Suharto, which ushered in the Reformation era, North Moluccan society resurrected the bitter political rivalry between Ternate and Tidore, thus stimulating the increase of political tensions. The political transformation among the regional elites drove the people to divide into different groups that distinguished themselves from each other through their history of loyalities, religions and sub-ethnicities.

However, as we have seen, the sharp divisions that stimulated the violence could not be maintained indefinitely. People needed to weave together different threads from their traditions, that would allow them to return to their homelands after their period of exile. Now the people are more aware of their power to engage in war or reconciliation. The common people are reformulating the relationship between different ethnic and religious groups based on justice, using the principles of exchange as a starting points. Family or clan rituals were infused with religious legitimation as each party took oaths in the name of God to keep their commitments to their former enemies. This dissertation has shown how ritual practices of exchange inform ethno-religious identity in the North Moluccas within the larger national identity of Indonesia. The people successfully deemphasized religious exclusivism by asserting their common ancestry, that enabled them to participate in a united ritual of peaceful negotiation.

Ritual exchange among the common people provides an alternative model for political negotiation that is different from the politics of domination. Government efforts often create unequal patron-client relationships whereas ritual exchange assumes reciprocity. Of course ritual exchange can also be manipulated to only serve the interests of a narrow kinship, religious or ideological group. However rituals of exchange are often used to overcome the segregation created by status social, religion and ethnic solidarities. Rituals of exchange build responsibility for mutual cooperation and extend the networks of friendships in society. But rituals may be ineffective if there is discrimination and injustice within the society. The practice of ritual exchange in the marriage process in Ngidiho includes a secret means of maintaining balance in the society. Modernization disconnects people from their origins if they don't manage the process of cultural transformation carefully. Ritual exchange is a fundamental resource that can break down the isolation and alienation experienced between members of a family and of a large community who are confronted with rapid social change.

Rituals of exchange include religious, cultural, economic and political elements, that cannot be separated from each other. For Indonesia, in the context of multiculturalism, local rituals can contribute to nation building if political pressures from the dominant discourse are used in moderate way. The principles of exchange practiced in the North Moluccas discourage the tendency to take action that only benefits the stronger party. Rather than stimulating healthy exchange, state elites often use conflicts as an opportunity to build their own empires. The Indonesian elites use the symbol of the great national family to resolve local conflicts in a way that benefits the national leadership, without paying attention to the principles of exchange that are practiced in common society. Local rebellions are often a protest against the stagnation of the exchange system and the growing gap between social classes.

Some Indonesians believe we need a new ritual structure to break out of the decadent structures of the past. Included in the "ritual repertoire" of current Indonesian discourse is the rise of the interest in making Indonesia a religious state. This political desire is problematic for most Indonesian Muslims since the universal ideal of an Islamic state is also exclusive and threatens other universal values such as universal citizenships, equal rights to civic participant, equal treatment under the law and religious freedom. My analysis has shown that positive, local, Islamic practices in Ngidiho, before the violence, demonstrate the capacity of Islam to adjust with the local culture. In contrast, imported "universal" ideologies stimulated the violence.

Religious values and local traditions are vital parts of both national and local Indonesian life. Ritual exchange protects the dignity and equality of all parties and avoids excessive centralization of power or the domination of the majority. This dissertation shows the double-edged power of ritual in hopes that deeper understanding of local traditions in the context of conflict can strengthen our common struggle to create a just society.

Politiek, ritueel en identiteit in Indonesië: een Molukse geschiedenis van religie en sociaal conflict

(Nederlandse samenvatting)

De Molukken hebben vandaag nog steeds te kampen met de naweeën van het geweld van 1999. Dat geweld begon op Ambon in januari van dat jaar en breidde zich uit tot de Noord-Molukken in december 1999. In deze studie heb ik de dynamiek van dit conflict geanalyseerd in het bredere kader van de veranderingen die het district Galela in de recente geschiedenis heeft ondergaan.

Tijdens deze gebeurtenissen was ik in het dorp Ngidiho in Noord-Halmahera bezig met een onderzoek naar de gevolgen van de globalisering op deze regio. Ik nam het groeiende geweld waar en zag hoe de spanningen geritualiseerd werden door middel van politieke symbolen en retoriek. Dat bracht een drastische verandering in mijn onderzoek, en ik richtte me op de rol van rituelen als machtige mechanismen zowel voor het creëren van solidariteit als voor het vergroten van het conflict. Ik nam ritueel als ingang en als analyse-instrument van mijn studie tegenover de gangbare visie op de burgeroorlog als primair een religieus conflict.

Deze invalshoek maakt het mogelijk om te begrijpen hoe mensen omgaan met het leven in een gemeenschap en met de politiek-economische veranderingen die hun gemeenschap doormaakte. Als solidariteitsmechanisme verenigt en mobiliseert ritueel mensen in een confrontatie met echte of vermeende buitenstaanders maar het kan ze ook helpen om overeenstemming te realiseren na de confrontatie.

Rituelen zijn praktijken die betekenis geven aan solidariteit, beginnend op het niveau van de familie tot de niveaus van verenigingen, buurtschappen, dorpen, districten, provincies en landen. In deze studie definieer ik rituelen als dynamische praktijken die geleid en geïnformeerd worden door ideologie, herinneringen en gewoonten die gevormd en hervormd worden in overeenstemming met de behoeften van het moment. Deze praktijken zijn gewoonlijk bij uitstek symbolische handelingen die heilige waarden belichamen om handelingen te rechtvaardigen. Deze waarden worden uitgedrukt in woorden, handelingen, gebaren, mythen, symbolen etc. Rituele praktijken consolideren en herstellen een gevoel van verbondenheid met een gemeenschap, maar als deze gemeenschap uiteenvalt door conflicten, kunnen dezelfde praktijken gebruikt worden om solidariteit tussen de strijdende partijen te creëren op eenzelfde wijze als ze gebruikt waren om antagonisme tussen deze partijen tot stand te brengen.

Het feit dat ik temidden van de bevolking van Ngidiho woonde gedurende het conflict en na het massale geweld, gaf me een uniek perspectief op de gebeurtenissen. Ik ben uitgegaan van de alledaagse praktijken van de bewoners waarmee ik de sociale geschiedenis van hun dorp kon reconstrueren. Mijn eigen etnografische verslag is het voornaamste instrument om de hedendaagse praktijken van de mensen te onderzoeken. Ik volg de mondelinge overlevering

van de mensen door hun handelingen te volgen en de interpretaties die zij er zelf aan verlenen. Daarmee laat ik het hedendaagse dorpsleven zien door de ogen van de bewoners. Vervolgens analyseer ik primaire en secundaire bronnen om de interpretaties en veronderstellingen van andere onderzoekers in de regio te begrijpen.

In de alledaagse praktijken van de bevolking van Ngidiho speelt ritueel een belangrijke rol. Het brengt een harmonieuze relatie tot stand van de mensen met de natuur. Ritueel structureert niet alleen de menselijke levenscyclus maar bemiddelt ook tussen mensen wanneer zij crises doormaken in hun families, clans en politieke verhoudingen. Ritueel fungeert als een mediërende "taal" die onderhandelingen vergemakkelijkt. Ritueel formuleert de ideologische en materiële condities en zet die om in concrete handelingen en het gebruikt heilige betekenissen om de beslissingen die zij samen bereiken, te legitimeren. Deze heilige betekenissen vinden hun oorsprong in de gemeenschappelijke voorouders die gezien worden als de goede geesten die hun clans en dorpen beschermen en die uiteindelijk ook de bron van het heil kunnen zijn.

Deze traditionele opvattingen veranderen en verdwijnen zelfs gedeeltelijk onder invloed van globalisering en de komst van nieuwe religies die de voorouders als bron van het heilige vervangen door God. Dit leidde tot ideologische veranderingen in de politiek van het ritueel. De modernisering van de landbouw bracht nieuwe structuren in de netwerken van verwanten en in leefpatronen. Binnen dezelfde materiële context kunnen verschillende concepten gebruikt worden om hetzelfde te verklaren. Zo kan de betekenis van locale religieuze praktijken aangepast worden aan de Islamitische en Christelijke doctrines zonder dat de oude betekenissen geheel verdwijnen.

De economische en ecologische transformatie van Galela leidde tot een herformulering van sociale en culturele gebruiken. De veranderingen in de materiële bestaansbasis van de gemeenschap dwongen mensen om de fundamentele begrippen en de normen voor hun gedrag te herzien. Maar de kloof tussen de oude en de jonge generatie belemmert de herformulering van de ideologie in de culturele praktijken.

Op sommige momenten wordt de sociale ongelijkheid tussen bevolkingsgroepen ritueel benadrukt. Dat is het geval in de huwelijksrituelen waar de uitwisseling tussen de betrokken families het terrein is waarop zij onderhandelen over hun positie in de gemeenschap. Dit ritueel is gericht om de handhaving van onderling vertrouwen en gelijkheid. Het uitwisselen van geschenken vindt vooral plaats in relatie tot mensen buiten het kerngezin. In Ngidiho zijn de relaties tussen broers en zussen onvoorwaardelijk, maar zijn die tussen anderen aan bepaalde voorwaarden gebonden. Het huwelijk is de voornaamste manier om verwantschapsrelaties en gemeenschapsrelaties uit te breiden. Dat geldt ook voor vreemdelingen die door hun huwelijk nieuw bloed in de familie brengen waardoor zij na hun dood een grote rol als voorouderlijke geesten kunnen spelen.

Solidariteit is een de basis waarop de mensen in Ngidiho hun netwerken uitbreiden. Dat komt o.m. naar voren in *jojobo*, een vorm van 'generalized exchange' die functioneert als een roulerend spaarsysteem waarmee elke familie de hoge kosten van de levenscyclusrituelen kan opbrengen. Het systeem maakt het mogelijk om mensen van buiten de familie binnen het netwerk van uitwisseling en onderlinge steun te brengen. Daarmee wordt uitwisseling het centrale mechanisme waarmee solidariteit en identiteit tot stand worden gebracht en onderhouden.

Dat wil niet zeggen dat uitwisseling zonder meer rechtvaardigheid of evenwicht creëren in de gemeenschap. In het conflict met de bananenplantage over de grond die deze onderneming onttrok aan Galela, namen de dorpelingen hun toevlucht tot een ritueel dat hen verenigde in hun strijd. Aan de andere kant leidde het toenemende bewustzijn van verschillende religieuze identiteiten tot een polarisatie van mensen die door banden van verwantschap, nabuurschap en cultuur met elkaar verbonden waren. Voordat dat echter tot een openlijk conflict leidde, probeerden families door rituelen de spanningen binnen en tussen families in de hand te houden. De bruiloft die ik in het begin van deze studie beschrijf is een voorbeeld van hoe ritueel handelen fungeerde temidden van locale spanningen.

De analyse van ritueel handelen vereist dat we begrijpen hoe rituele functioneren in de bredere context van onderhandelingen over macht en sociale positie. Een 'thick description' is nodig om de condities en motieven van de betrokken te begrijpen. Deze beschrijving beoogt niet om ritueel handelen in een politieke context los te maken van de culturele inbedding ervan. De beschrijving is slechts een hulpmiddel om te begrijpen dat de totale betekenis van een rituele handeling zowel de ideologie omvat die zij uitdrukt als de materiële condities waarover onderhandeld wordt. In deze studie onderzoek ik de spanningen tussen de materiële belangen van verschillende groepen die van invloed zijn op het ontstaan van bepaalde politieke rituelen. Het koloniale streven naar een handelsmonopolie maakte gebruik van tegenstrijdige ideologieën die erop gericht waren om de samenleving en de bevolking onder controle te brengen en de natuurlijke hulpbronnen te exploiteren. De koloniale overheid deden dat door in te spelen op de materiële behoeften van de bevolking maar ook door de mentaliteit van deze bevolking om te vormen tot grotere loyaliteit. Deze politiek-economische en culturele transformatie heeft het district Galela ingrijpen veranderd.

Religie en ritueel bieden wegen om een collectieve identiteit op te bouwen. Religie creëert coalities tegen vijanden van de gemeenschap. De kracht van gedeelde waarden maakte het ook mogelijk om externe machtsinstanties te aanvaarden en ze tegelijkertijd om te vormen om hun kennis te vergroten zonder de ideologische inhoud ervan over te nemen. Zo werden de oude feodale relaties met de sultan van Ternate radicaal veranderd door de komst van een nieuwe macht van buitenaf die gebaseerd was op handel.

Religieuze loyaliteit bond de samenleving in de Noord Molukken samen maar deze werd altijd beïnvloed door concurrentie om de handel. In Halmahera begon de verbreiding van de Islam en het Christendom langzaam op gang te komen aan het einde van de 19^{e} eeuw. Hoewel de sultan van Ternate een Moslim was die de

politieke identiteit van Halmahera mede gestalte gaf, ging dit proces niet soepel omdat zijn beleid de locale bevolking vaak onder druk zette. Inheemse groepen die zich bedreigd voelden door de sultan hielden vast aan hun tribale religie of bekeerden zich tot het Christendom. Maar religie en politiek raakten pas echt met elkaar verbonden tijdens de verkiezingen van 1955 toen religieuze identiteit de basis werd van politieke partijen. In Ngidiho werden de mensen gedwongen zich tot de Islam of het Christendom te bekeren voordat zij aan de verkiezingen mee konden doen. Maar ook later probeerde de centrale regering in Jakarta politieke loyaliteit op de Molukken te creëren door gebruik te maken van oude loyaliteiten. Dit gebeurde bijvoorbeeld door de sultan van Ternate tot de regionale leider van de regeringspartij Golkar te maken en hem later een terugkeer tot zijn oude invloedrijke positie in het vooruitzicht te stellen. De strijd om de regionale macht werd dus ingepast in historische herinneringen: politieke rituelen en regionale machtsconflicten raakten zo onderling verweven.

De nationale politiek had een groot effect op de regionale verhoudingen in de Noord Molukken, zeker toen deze regio de status kreeg van een aparte provincie: op dat moment werd de oude rivaliteit tussen de sultanaten van Ternate en Tidore nieuw leven ingeblazen waarbij de eerste gesteund werd door Jakarta en de voormalige sultan van Tidore de steun kreeg van de Kao en de Makian. Deze machtsstrijd was uiteindelijk een van de factoren die het grote conflict in de Noord Molukken wist aan te jagen.

In Halmahera waren de rellen niet het resultaat van locale ontwikkelingen, maar van nationale politieke spelletjes om de regionale macht en de controle over de belangrijke natuurlijke hulpbronnen in het gebied. De politieke instabiliteit bood een gelegenheid om gebieden onder controle te krijgen. De bestuurlijke elite nam haar toevlucht tot geweld om haar wil op te leggen en de locale bevolking moest partij kiezen. Politieke rituelen droegen ertoe bij dat de mensen zich gingen voorbereiden op een oorlog. De locale media en de geruchtenmachine droegen ertoe bij dat de indruk werd gewekt dat een geweldsuitbarsting onvermijdelijk was: een vervalste brief waarin gesuggereerd werd dat de Christenen uit waren op een machtsovername in de regio, vormde de lont in het kruidvat. In een ander gerucht werd gezegd dat de islamitische Makian de goudmijn in Kao wilden overnemen met behulp van de overheid.

Hoewel er in het algemeen een grote mate van religieuze tolerantie bestond (de meeste mensen beleden hun officiële religie maar hielden ook nog vast aan hun loyaliteit tegenover de voorouders), leidde de angst dat een van beide groepen uit was op een machtsgreep tot een uitbarsting van geweld.

De mensen reageerden op verschillende manieren. Allereerst begonnen gewone mensen die voorheen vreedzaam samenleefden, elkaar aan te vallen en uit te moorden. Daarvoor moesten zij zich losmaken uit hun verwantschapsnetwerken. Ze rechtvaardigden hun acties zowel via hun universele religieuze identiteit als Moslims of Christenen als via locale voorouderrituelen die hun machtsstructuren en aanspraken op de waarheid versterkten. Het ritueel gaf een heilige legitimatie van hun handelen, beloofde onschendbaarheid van hun lichamen en helderheid

tegenover de ambiguïteit van hun identiteit en status (vgl. Douglas 1988 [1966]: 103-104).

Vervolgens publiceerden leiders van de bureaucratische elite in Ternate en Tidore een aantal boeken en artikelen die een rationele verklaring probeerden te geven voor de rechtvaardigheid van de oorlog waarin zij verwikkeld waren. Deze publicaties brachten een discours waarin de geschiedenis van de afzonderlijke groepen en religies herschreven werden met een claim op het unieke karakter ten opzichte van de andere groep en ten opzichte van de voorouderlijke religies. Deze historische interpretaties ontbrak het wel aan logische consistentie maar ze onthulden een discours dat in globale termen vervat was.

Ongetwijfeld is de "herinnering" aan wat er voor en na de rellen gebeurde een van de belangrijke factoren die het conflict bepaalden, maar ook de oplossing daarvan. Herinnering bepaalt hoe we verdelingen in een samenleving zien. Zo heeft Bauman (1982) aangetoond hoe herinneringen de sociale klassen vormden aan het einde van de 18e eeuw. Herinnering maakt de geschiedenis levend en samenlevingen hebben behoefte aan een levende geschiedenis in hun pogingen om de betekenis te begrijpen van sociale veranderingen. Herinnering is cruciaal in het samenbinden van mensen maar tegelijkertijd reconstrueren mensen hun herinneringen: ze vergeten een pijnlijke geschiedenis als die niet meer van nut is om te overleven in een veranderingsproces. Ook in Halmahera werd een nieuwe geschiedenis geschreven na de geweldsuitbarstingen. Dat heeft zeker een politieke functie maar de mensen in de dorpen proberen deze pijnlijke gebeurtenissen door ze te relateren aan hun religieuze opvattingen.

Zo verklaarden sommigen het geweld als het werk van Satan of ze objectiveerden het door het gebruik van het woord 'ramp' waarmee ze hun eigen deelname aan het geweld konden interpreteren als een natuurverschijnsel. Soms lukt het om rampen op die manier te overwinnen, maar soms ook niet. De geschiedenis die in de herinnering van gemeenschappen leeft is niet eenduidig en gefixeerd. Historische herinneringen kunnen met behulp van traditionele praktijken en ideeën aangepast worden als mensen met nieuwe en veranderende situaties geconfronteerd worden.

De fysieke grenzen van de etnische geschiedenis die voor december 1999 nog onduidelijk waren, werden duidelijk na het conflict. Etnische identiteit werd gelijkgesteld met religieuze identiteit. Etnische groepen construeerden zowel seculiere als messianistische ideologieën om hun veronderstelde identiteit in stand te houden en hun strijd te inspireren (Anderson 1999). Politieke etikettering gebaseerd op antagonistische religieuze loyaliteiten leidde tot scherpe scheidslijnen in de samenleving. Mensen werden verdeeld naar etniciteit, religie en afstamming. In de Noord-Molukken zijn grenzen tussen mensen niet alleen maar imaginair maar wel degelijk een fysieke realiteit. Religieuze rituelen bevatten taboes die gelden voor de ene gemeenschap maar niet voor de andere. Ideologische taboes creëerden de fysieke scheiding tussen de huizen van de Moslims en de Christenen in Ngidiho (onder meer om te voorkomen dat de varkens die de Christenen hielden, op de erven en in de huizen van de Moslims

zouden komen). Tijdens het conflict maakten de vluchtelingen ook geografische grenzen gebaseerd op religie: de Moslims vluchtten naar Ternate en Tidore en de Christenen naar Tobelo (in de Noord Molukken) en naar Manado-Bitung op Noord Sulawesi.

Verbeelde religieuze identiteiten die door geweld tot stand gekomen zijn, bedreigen de identiteit van gewone mensen. Maar wanneer mensen van elkaar gescheiden zijn door fysieke bedreigingen, dan zal hun fysieke segregatie slechts zo lang duren als het fysieke gevaar blijft bestaan. Mensen zoeken naar een vrije ruimte in sociale relaties met iedere partij die geen bedreiging vormt, en kunnen zich los maken van de imaginaire grenzen die door politieke middelen gecreëerd werden om opnieuw relaties aan te knopen via economische uitwisseling.

Na het conflict heroriënteerden de vluchtelingen zich op hun plaats van herkomst en steeds minder op hun religieuze identiteit. Christenen uit de Noord Molukken identificeerden zich met Halmahera en Moslims met Ternate en Tidore. Deze heroriëntatie laat zien dat de plaats van herkomst een belangrijk bindmiddel kan zijn voor de verschillende groepen. De bevestiging van hun identiteit via hun plaats van herkomst is een proces dat de verzoening in de Noord Molukken op gang kan brengen omdat men dan kan aansluiten bij gemeenschappelijke sociaal-culturele praktijken.

Maar in het geval van de vluchtelingen die in Noord Sulawesi of op Ternate-Tidore verbleven, was hun identiteit in de eerste plaats verbonden met hun landbezit en minder met hun politieke affiliatie. Vluchtelingen in Noord Sulawesi noemen zich ‘mensen van Halmahera’. Waarom beschouwden ze zichzelf niet als ‘mensen van Ternate’ waar het bestuurlijke centrum is? Een reden hiervoor is dat tijdens het massale geweld van 1999-2000 de regionale overheid geen bescherming bood. Maar ook noemen ze zichzelf niet ‘mensen van Minahasa’ (Noord Sulawesi) omdat ze voor zichzelf geen werk en toekomst zien in deze nieuwe regio. Zij zijn erop gericht terug te keren naar hun gebied van herkomst waar zij hun grond hebben geërfd van hun voorouders en waar zij een toekomst willen opbouwen.

De vluchtelingen in Ternate aan de andere kant identificeren zich als ‘mensen van Galela, Loloda of Tobelo’ en niet als ‘mensen van Halmahera’. Gedurende het conflict waren de Moslim strijdgroepen op districtsniveau georganiseerd en zo werd het district het referentiepunt voor identificatie. Toen zij terugkeerden naar hun thuisdorpen konden zij zich beroepen op hun status als ‘autochtonen’ om nieuwkomers te weren die het voorzien hadden op het land dat de Christenen op hun vlucht hadden achtergelaten. Zo wisten zij de grond van de Christenen te beschermen. Een gemeenschappelijke identificatie van zowel de gevluchte Christenen als de achtergebleven Moslims die zich allen beschouwen als ‘mensen van Halmahera’ omdat zij voorouderlijke grond bezitten in de streek, is een sterke locale basis om tot verzoening te komen.

Grondbezit werd zo het uitgangspunt voor een herstel van de verhoudingen. De mensen accepteerden het voorouderlijk territorium *tona ma langi* als plaats waar

het reconciliatieproces moest beginnen. Genealogische mythes en vooroudelijke rituelen gaven richting aan de onderhandelingen. Beide groepen gebruikten elementen uit hun gemeenschappelijke traditie om de verbroken relaties te herstellen. Maar ze beriepen zich ook om hun verwantschap met alle mensen zoals die door Moslims en Christenen wordt beleden. Naarmate het vertrouwen groeit kunnen zij hun relaties weer opbouwen, bij elkaar op bezoek te gaan en door weer ruilrelaties aan te gaan via een rituele uitwisseling van hun surplus. Non-gouvernementele organisaties droegen bij aan dit proces door in de primaire behoeften van de teruggekeerde vluchtelingen te voorzien. Bovendien stimuleerden zij dat Moslims meehielpen om de huizen van Christenen te bouwen, en omgekeerd.

Reconciliatie opende de weg naar wederopbouw en een normaal economisch verkeer maar zij vereiste ook een collectief ritueel van 'vergeten' en de creatie van een nieuwe regionale solidariteit (vgl. Gulliver 1979: 16). Dit ritueel bevat elementen van religieuze en etnische rituelen met de nadruk op wat hun gemeenschappelijke afstamming voor hen betekent.

Door hun religieuze exclusivisme af te zwakken en hun gemeenschappelijke afstamming te benadrukken konden mensen een gezamenlijk kader creëren voor vreedzame onderhandelingen over hoe de toekomst eruit moest zien. Dat geeft de kracht aan van een model dat gebaseerd is op rituele uitwisseling en dat krachtiger blijkt te zijn dan pogingen van de Indonesische overheid om tot voorziening te komen omdat die doorgaans gekanaliseerd worden via de hiërarchie van de bureaucratie of via patronage-banden tussen politieke leiders en hun volgelingen. Rituele uitwisseling is gebaseerd op reciprociteit en verschaffen daarmee een kader voor samenwerking en de uitbreiding van sociale netwerken.

Uitwisselingsrituelen zijn 'totale instituties' en omvatten religieuze, culturele, economische en politieke elementen die onverbrekelijk met elkaar verbonden zijn. Als zodanig kunnen dit soort locale rituelen ook een bijdrage leveren aan het proces van staatsvorming in Indonesië omdat ze gebaseerd zijn op gelijkheid. Hoewel Indonesische elites sinds Sukarno altijd de metafoor gebruiken van het land als één grote familie, hebben ze slechts zelden gebruik gemaakt van de principes van uitwisseling bij de oplossing van conflicten. In dat opzicht kan de Indonesische overheid nog heel wat leren van de wijze waarop in Ngidiho verzoening gezocht wordt.

Religieuze waarden en locale tradities zijn vitale waarden van het nationale en het locale leven in Indonesië. Rituele uitwisseling garandeert de gelijkheid van alle partijen en voorkomt een excessieve concentratie van macht of de overheersing door een meerderheid. In deze studie hoop ik te hebben aangetoond dat ritueel een tweesnijdend zwaard is en dat een beter begrip van locale manieren om met traumatische conflicten om te gaan kan leren hoe een rechtvaardige samenleving tot stand gebracht kan worden.

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